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Editorial

A CONTRIBUTOR to a recent issue of *Parish and People*[1] wrote as follows:

> The deacon has a limited number of functions. He may assist with the administration of the sacraments, with the teaching of the Word and with the pastoral work of his parish. They are all functions which the Priest performs with more authority. There is no recognition of the diaconate as a ministry existing in its own right with its own special functions to perform. In effect the deacon is an apprentice priest, the diaconate a pale shadow of the Priesthood.

These words have in view the contemporary practice of the Church of England. It is interesting to compare with them some remarks of the famous canonist Van Espen. With regard to the Church of Rome, he said:

> As far as concerns deacons, the modern discipline has so declined, that scarcely any office is left to the deacons, except the ministry of the altar. And even in this the ministry of the deacons is often (especially in cathedral and collegiate churches) supplied by presbyters; so that at last it has come to this, that deacons *are not ordained to discharge the duties of deacons*, but to ascend by the diaconate as a step to the presbyterate. Whence, also, no one is ordained deacon in order that he may continue in that office, but in order that he may be promoted to the presbyterate, when the canonical interval of time has elapsed.[2]

In the 16th century some of the English Reformers used brave protestations which implied that they would restore the supposed scriptural functions of deacons. Thus William Tyndale:

> The apostles chose deacons to minister the alms of the rich unto the poor. . . . And the pope . . . instead of such deacons, . . . maketh both deacons and sub-deacons, which do nothing at all, but are vain names without office; except it be that on some holy day, instead of ministering the goods of the church unto the poor, they sing an epistle or gospel, to beg more from the poor.[3]

And to the same effect William Fulke:

> If the word "deacon" be taken for such an one, as at a popish mass standeth in a disguised tunicle, holding a patten, or some other idolatrous bauble used of them; the people must be taught, that this name signifieth a minister, which was ordained not to serve the popish altar, but the poor men's tables, that is, to provide for the poor, and to see the church's alms bestowed upon them.[4]

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[1] April 1955, p. 16.

[2] *Jus Canonicum*, i, 5 f. Quoted by W. Palmer, *A Treatise on the Church of Christ*, ii, 306 f.

[3] "The Practice of Prelates," in Tyndale's *Expositions &c.* (Parker Soc.), pp. 275 f.

[4] Fulke, *Defence of Translations of the Bible* (Parker Soc.), p. 218.

But already by the time of Whitgift and Hooker the ambition to return to the scriptural diaconate in the Church of England had, rightly or wrongly, been moderated if not abandoned. We find Whitgift in his controversy with Cartwright justifying the diaconate as "the first step to the ministry".[1] Hooker allowed that deacons were made to be

> stewards of the Church, unto whom at the first was committed the distribution of church goods, the care of providing therewith for the poor, and the charge to see that all things of expense might be religiously and faithfully dealt in. A part also of their office was attendance upon their presbyters at the time of divine service.

But he continued:

> These only being the uses for which deacons were first made, if the Church hath sithence extended their ministry farther than the circuit of their labour at the first was drawn, we are not herein to think the ordinance of Scripture violated except there appear some prohibition which hath abridged the Church of that liberty. . . . Now tract of time having clean worn out those first occasions for which the deaconship was then most necessary, it might the better be afterwards extended to other services, and so remain as at this present day a degree in the clergy of God which the Apostles of Christ did institute.[2]

Somewhat later, Herbert Thorndike stated what seems ever since to have been the accepted view of the Church of England:

> The office of deacons, though set up at the first upon occasion of ministering the oblation of the faithful to the necessities of the poor, yet if we regard the practice of it in the times next the Apostles, cannot be better expressed than [by] calling them "assistants" to the office of government resting in the presbyters.[3]

The time appears now to be ripe for a reconsideration of the "deaconship". Suggestions of one kind and another are being made for adapting the ministry of the Church to the needs of the present age. Is the office of deacon being used as it should be used? In order to begin to answer that question, it is necessary to know as much as possible about the past history of the diaconate and how this office or order of the ministry has been used and understood from the time of the Apostles onwards.

We do not suppose that it is only Anglicans who need to think afresh about deacons, though perhaps we have special obligations in the matter and possibly much to learn from other traditions. The preface to our ordinal commits us to maintaining three orders of ministers—bishops, priests, and deacons. "Bishops, Priests *and Deacons* have always been the outward sign of the apostolicity of our Church," says a recent Anglican writer.[4] In considering proposals for church reunion we are accustomed to attach much importance to the place that the episcopate and the presbyterate will have in a united church. Ought we not to attach equal importance to the place of the diaconate—or, if not equal importance, at least *some* importance? But what is the proper place, what are the proper functions,

[1] *Works of John Whitgift* (Parker Soc.), iii, 68–71.
[2] *Eccl. Pol.*, V, lxxviii, 5. (Ed. J. Keble.)
[3] *Works of Herbert Thorndike* (L.A.C.T.), i, 178.
[4] Cosslett Quin, *At the Lord's Table* (1954), p. 111. Italics ours.

of deacons? Are we not culpably tongue-tied on the subject? We had better turn our minds to it, before awkward questions are pressed upon us and find us unprepared.

This number of THEOLOGY is designed to open up a study of the place of deacons in the Church by providing reliable information about the place that they have occupied in the past in various periods and traditions. The contributors, to whom we are most grateful for readily responding to our invitation, were asked to help us with the historical prolegomena, though we did not forbid them to hint at the theological or practical conclusions they would themselves draw from the evidence they adduce.

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We have received a large number of letters about the Bishop of Rochester's article on "Priests and Frequent Communion". We shall return to the subject in the December issue, which will also contain Prof. Norman Sykes's sermon on "The Marian Martyrs", preached before Cambridge University.

Deacons in the New Testament

THERE is little doubt that ideas of dignity and honour were revolutionized when Jesus took a towel and girded himself for what are commonly called menial duties. In pagan ethics the menial mind was almost a sin. It was the Son of Man who declared that he came not to be waited on but to wait on others; who took upon him the form of a slave; and who taught his friends that to be the waiter was to be great. Thus *diakonein*, "to be a waiter", became an important word for the functions of Christians. It was freely applied both to what Christ had done and to what he continued to do in his people.

The word *diakonein* is thus common to the whole Church. When therefore it is used in a specialized sense it is reasonable, as a start, to assume that it is a delegated specialization. If, that is, certain persons within the community are distinguished as *diakonoi*, it is only because they are rendering, in some representative form, the service or "ministry" which it is the vocation of every member of the whole Church to render to all who need it. And if, again, there are further distinctions within this more specialized diaconate or "ministry", that is only another example of the principle of specialization. If there are waiters, there must be head-waiters or foremen; and such men will naturally be drawn from the more experienced members of the community: they are elders, or elder-overseers.

To have put *diakonein* as the foundation of the whole structure of service is not to prejudge any issues about the origin of the specialized office of deacon, still less to suggest that the "higher" orders were created by mere evolution from "below". It is only to underline that *diakonia* is essentially the "ministry"—the job of all Christians. By far the greater number of occurrences of *diakonos, diakonia, diakonein,* in the New Testament are clearly non-technical. If in 1 Tim. 3

diakonos is technical, no further off than 1 Tim. 4. 6 Timothy is himself described as *diakonos* of Christ Jesus; and elsewhere, too, the words are applied to all sorts of service by all sorts of persons, from Christ himself, and his ministers, to the ministers of Satan. The terms can only be assumed to be technical, therefore, when the context requires it.

As for the origin of the specialized office, it is well to recognize at once how slender are the New Testament data. 1 Tim. 3 contains by far the greater part of our entire information. Here two Church officers are indicated—overseers and servants (*episkopoi* and *diakonoi*)—and the qualifications of the two are practically identical. They must be of irreproachable character, family men free from any trace of scandal, and devoid of mercenary ambitions. The only substantial differences are that the overseer must be no novice (implying that the deacon may be a younger man), while the deacons must be such as hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience—honest, convinced Christians. This last requirement is obviously not peculiar to the diaconate: if there is any special reason for its omission in the section about overseers, it may be (as B. S. Easton suggests in his commentary on the Pastoral Epistles) because deacons would not have the steadying influence of fellow-members in the council to which the overseers would (as Easton holds) belong, but would be acting individually.

Apart from this hint of pastoral work, nothing whatever is said about the functions of deacons; only that they, like the overseers, must go through a period of probation before starting their work; and that, by good service, they secure for themselves a "basis" and confidence—presumably a basis from which they may be promoted to wider service. Both overseers and deacons are required to have shown themselves capable of taking the lead in their families: this implies that both alike are expected to exercise gifts of leadership in their office. Both alike may have been remunerated: 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18 makes it fairly clear that elders were. Whether imposition of hands was used in their commissioning or not is uncertain: 1 Tim. 5. 22 is not expressly related to them. In Titus there is no mention of *diakonoi*, only of elder-overseers.

Elsewhere in the New Testament the only other clearly technical use of the word is in the address of Phil. 1. 1, where the deacons come second to the overseers, exactly as is implied in 1 Tim. 3. Phoebe, the *diakonos* of the church at Cenchreae (Rom. 16. 1), may or may not have been an official. (It is unlikely that the women mentioned in 1 Tim. 3 were deaconesses: more probably they are simply the wives of the officials.) It is possible that Archippus, in Col. 4. 17, was an official, for his *diakonia* was something he had "received (*parelabes*) in the Lord".

There is no mention of an order of deacons in Acts 6. Despite opinions to the contrary, it seems impossible to treat this passage as evidence of the diaconate. For what are the facts? First, the daily poor relief is described as *diakonia*. Then, the Apostles declare that it is not right for them to abandon evangelism in order to look after the

meals (for this seems to be the meaning); and the Seven are appointed, so that the Apostles may be free for "the *diakonia* of the word". Thus evangelism and the relief work are both alike *diakoniai*; and the Seven are not called deacons, nor is there anything to suggest that "serving tables", in contrast to "serving the word", was an official function. Later, when we meet one of these men—Philip—again, he is called not the Deacon, but the Evangelist, one of the Seven (Acts 21. 8). Thus there is no evidence here that deacons, in the specialized sense, were almoners. Where an office is intended, its duties are not indicated, except in so far as exemplary character and leadership and sound faith suggest that they are pastoral duties. What is clear is that it is an office junior to that of overseership.

We are thus brought face to face with the possibility that, after all, the deacon may have been so called not (as might be deduced from the data given at the beginning of this article) because he was the representative of the whole community's "ministry", so much as because he was the elder-overseer's "assistant". There is insufficient evidence for determining this question. It might well be that the title included both these aspects of service—the general and the particular. It is true that in Judaism the archisynagogue's assistant was called, in Greek, not *diakonos* but *huperetes*;[1] and the fact that the Christian word was not *huperetes* but *diakonos* might therefore be taken as a hint that the primary significance was general service rather than attendance on the overseer as his junior assistant. But this is really too slender a thread to bear such weight: and *diakonein* is used in Acts 19. 22 of much the same attendance upon the apostle as seems to be implied by *huperetes* in Acts 3. 5. Thus *diakonos* might mean the senior officer's assistant as well as "the Minister".

It looks as though precise analogies for the office were not to be found outside Christianity itself. When, in 1 Clement 42—the only other writing generally assigned to the New Testament period in which overseers and deacons are mentioned—appeal is made to Isa. 60. 17, *diakonoi* are introduced by main force into the quotation. Neither *diakonos* nor, for that matter, *huperetes* is at all prominent in the LXX. Thus, we are driven back upon speculation about the origin and the original function of the diaconate. The two best-known types of guess relate it to the Eucharist or to the almoner's work.[2] As far as the New Testament evidence goes, however, there seems to be no less reason for seeing the diaconate as pastoral and evangelistic. It will be for those who discuss the subsequent periods to divine, if they can, more about the early beginnings by deductions from the data with which they deal.

C. F. D. Moule.

[1] H. W. Beyer in Kittel's *Theologisches Wörterbuch*, ii, p. 91.

[2] An interesting (and now frequently overlooked) presentation of the former view is to be found in H. F. Hamilton, *The People of God* (Oxford, 1912), vol. ii. The latter view is the natural concomitant of the assumption that Acts 6 represents the institution of the diaconate.

Deacons in the Early Church

THE deacon was a thoroughly well-known figure in all the churches of the first centuries, pre-eminently associated with the church's care of the poor and of the sick. There is a story of Lawrence, deacon of Rome, martyred 258, who on his arrest was ordered to hand over the treasures of the church. He returned with the poor of the Christian community, the jewels of Christ's people. Though his tale is but a legend,[1] yet there is here a reflection of the diaconal preoccupation with the possessions and the welfare services of the local church. It is not certain what influence Acts 6 had in bringing this about, or in controlling its development and providing after 200 biblical sanction for the avocations of deacons, but the number 7 is suggestive.[2] This is clearly established for Rome, where Cornelius, its bishop, in a letter in 251 to Fabian, bishop of Antioch, says there were 46 presbyters, 7 deacons, 7 sub-deacons, 42 acolytes, 52 exorcists, readers and doorkeepers, above 1,500 widows and persons in distress, all of whom, the clergy and the poor, were supported by the church, i.e. by "an immense and countless laity", perhaps some 40,000, 4 or 5 per cent. of the population.[3] In small places some deacons may have depended, like Paul, on a trade for their daily bread, but in the great cities, the spawning grounds of the church, deaconing was a whole-time affair, and deacons were supported by the alms of the faithful. The 6th *Apostolic Canon* reads: "Let not a bishop, presbyter, or deacon undertake worldly business; otherwise let him be deposed." Prudentius in his *Peristephanon* is also a witness for a city church having 7 deacons. He calls Lawrence the chief of the 7 deacons at Rome (2. 37), and names Vincent as one of the 7 deacons of Saragossa in the days of Diocletian (5. 32). A council, meeting *c.* 314 at Neocaesarea in Cappadocia, laid down in its 15th canon: "In even the largest towns there must be, according to the rule, no more than 7 deacons. This may be proved from the Acts of the Apostles." In *The Testament of our Lord,* written 4th–5th century in Asia Minor, Syria or Egypt,[4] ch. 33–8 are devoted to deacons. Ch. 34 allots a church 12 presbyters, 7 deacons, 14 sub-deacons, 13 widows who sit in the front.[5] This was clearly a widespread rule. It would mean in a small community the diaconate was something of a sinecure; but in a great church as at Rome a deacon was a personage, and needed as assistants sub-deacons, etc. *The Testament of our Lord* gives the ancient picture of a deacon's activity in care of a congregation, its manners, leading its prayers, teaching catechumens, looking after the sick and destitute, clothing and burying the dead, attending to strangers, in charge of the guest house—veritably a life of good works.

The *Didascalia Apostolorum*[6] of the 3rd century and from Syria

[1] *The Saints of the Canon of the Mass,* V. L. Kennedy (1938), p. 127.
[2] See H. Leclercq, *D.A.C.L.,* iv, part 1, col. 739–42.
[3] Eus., *H.E.,* vi, 43, 11. [4] Dix, *Apost. Trad. Hipp.* (1937), p. lxvi.
[5] Cooper and Maclean (1902), p. 99. [6] Trans., etc., R. H. Connolly (1929).

(or perhaps Palestine) tells us much the same things; though here the number of deacons is to be proportionate to the number of the congregation (p. 148). This is not from distaste for symbolism, for the bishop is said to be in the place of God Almighty, the deacon in that of Christ, the deaconess is to be honoured as the Holy Spirit, and the presbyters as though they were the apostles (p. 88). As prayer is made to the Father through the Son, so the lay folk should approach the bishop through the deacon. The bishop and the deacon are urged to be of one mind, even as the Father and the Son. "Let the deacon be the hearing of the bishop, and his mouth and his heart and his soul: for when you are both of one mind, through your agreement there will be peace also in the church" (p. 109). This recalls the 18th-century parson and clerk, e.g. Swift and Roger at Laracor. That the bishop's prayers may be heard on high, the deacon is to call out in church: "Is there anyone who keepeth aught against his fellow?" Then shall the bishop strive to reconcile those at law or enmity with one another (p. 117). This divine pattern of the relationship of bishop and deacon would suggest the bishop had but one deacon, but this was probably rarely if ever so. There is a description of two deacons, one at the door, the other watching over the oblations and allotting places to those assembling. They do wardens' and sidesmen's duties in seeing no one whispers, sleeps, laughs, makes signs, that with due decorum all are attentive to the word of the Lord (p. 120). In ch. 16 (pp. 146 f.) the bishop anoints, the deacon or presbyter baptizes. Presbyters all through the book appear as rather secondary, though senior, to the bishop's close and constant companions, the deacons. The last thing said of them is that they are to serve the sick and infirm after the example of the Master washing the disciples' feet (p. 150).

H. Lietzmann[1] says at Rome the care of the poor was such an engrossing function that in course of time the deacons responsible for it were deprived of the liturgical functions they performed in other places. The restriction to 7 made the deacons the bishop's close associates and executives, and the bishop's chair when vacant was usually filled by one of them. Fabian, bishop of Rome 236–50, divided the city into 7 districts, and assigned each district to one of the 7 deacons. He also appointed 7 subdeacons to act as the deacons' adjutants, and in due time to succeed to their places in the college of deacons. Thus was unbroken continuity in the administration secured. It is understandable how such clerical professionalism led to measures of segregation—to such regulations as the 24th canon of Laodicea: "No one who belongs to the priesthood from a presbyter to a deacon, and so downwards in the ecclesiastical order to acolytes, readers, singers, exorcists or doorkeepers, or of the order of ascetics, may go into a tavern." There was also the growing control and cessation of clerical marriage.

Lietzmann ventures an opinion on the origin of deacons.[2] Apart from apostles, prophets and teachers whom God endowed with a

[1] *The Founding of the Church Universal* (3rd ed., 1953), p. 249.
[2] *The Beginnings of the Christian Church* (rev. ed., 1949), pp. 145 f.

special charisma for the exercise of their spiritual offices in the church as a whole, there were other leaders appointed to serve the daily needs of the community. In spite of occasional idealization these were in fact the result of the sociological circumstances of individual churches. They were the men responsible for their financial and business affairs. Their titles, bishop and deacon, not being adaptations of Jewish usage, are something of a mystery. He suggests they may have been the terminology of such a church as Antioch, and have spread thence to the rest of gentile Christianity. " 'Deacon' means 'servant', and in particular one who waits at table, a waiter. Perhaps this gives a hint of the original significance of the office. The deacons served the church at the Lord's Supper, and carried the bread and wine to the homes of those who were absent."[1] The faithful took the eucharistic bread home to nibble before all meals. The deacons carried the sacrament, not because no one not in sacred orders was fit to handle it, but because this was a convenience to the church as a whole that they should outside the time of assembly continue the function assigned them within the congregation. The absent "were mostly and as a rule the sick; and thus the deacons combined their special office with that of looking after the sick". Acts 6 could then be appealed to. Certainly before the end of the 2nd century Acts 6 was taken as relating the creation of deacons. Irenaeus (3. 12. 10; 4. 15. 1) calls Stephen the first deacon appointed by the apostles. In practice, therefore, the deacons "became the assistants of the bishop in discharging services of love to all the members of the church who were in need". If this be accepted, then in the course of the 2nd century the bishop becomes also a charismatic, one in the power of the Spirit teaching, kindling, ruling, guiding, leading the holy people of God; but the deacon was left far more in his original status.

In the *Didache*, ch. 15, "Appoint for yourselves, therefore, bishops and deacons", it seems the deacon like the bishop is elected, chosen, by the whole congregation. This too seems to be the case in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus.[2] But in the *Didascalia*, ch. 16, p. 146, we get "O bishop, . . . those that please thee out of all the people thou shalt choose and appoint as deacons"; and Cyprian wrote to his fellow-bishop Rogatianus: "Deacons ought to remember that the Lord chose apostles, that is, bishops and overseers; while apostles appointed for themselves deacons after the ascent of the Lord into heaven, as ministers of their episcopacy and of the church. But if we may dare anything against God who makes bishops, deacons may also dare against us by whom they are made."[3] Hippolytus decrees that the deacon-elect shall be ordained by the laying on of the bishop's hands alone, and not of the rest of the presbytery with him, as was done at the making of a presbyter. Reason is given for this. He does not receive the spirit in which all the presbyters share and in the power of which they take counsel for the good of the

[1] Ignat., *Trall.* 23; Justin, *Apol.* 65. 5; 67. 5.
[2] Dix, op. cit., p. 15; B. Botte, *La Tradition Apostolique* (1946), p. 39.
[3] Migne, *P.L.*, iv, 408. Ep. 65. 3; Ante-Nicene Library, viii, 227.

church, but he is made responsible for whatever the bishop allots to him. So he is ordained not to priesthood but to serve as the bishop shall direct. Hippolytus gives the text of a prayer for the bishop to use at his ordaining of a deacon. In this the relation of deacon to bishop is perhaps hinted at, after the manner of the *Didascalia*, as being that of the Son to the Father, that the deacon is to serve the bishop as the Son "was sent to serve thy will and make manifest thy intentions to us". It goes on to pray, not for the presbyteral spirit of counsel, but for the deacon's spirit of courtesy, earnestness and diligence, that he, chosen by the church, may minister to the church as the bishop directs, and bring up the gifts of the people that are to be offered to God by the bishop and presbyters, as the high priests ordained by him for the glory of his name. This excludes the deacon from the priesthood *par excellence*, the magisterium and regnum of the church; but in these early days, as in the canon of Laodicea above, priesthood could be conceived in more general terms than was later customary, i.e. leadership of the spiritual community, not separation for the offering of sacrifices in the name of the people. In this wider sense the diaconate was regarded as part of the ministerial priesthood of the church; in Cyprian's phrase it was the third priesthood. On this Bingham has written excellently in his *Antiquities* (2. 19. 15). The whole of ch. 20 in Book 2 is on deacons. It is full of the most valuable references and information. In sect. 5 he discusses the old and obsolete custom of the deacons' preparing the bread and wine on the altar for the eucharist, and not only bringing up the people's gifts to the bishop for blessing, but also calling out in the assembly the names of the givers.[1] Very few are the influences of Hippolytus on later Roman liturgy; but the rubric discussed above about the deacon being ordained for the bishop's service, and not the priesthood proper, has been part of the pontifical since at least the 10th century. The Arlesian *Statuta Ecclesiae Antiqua*, 5th–6th century, were the intermediary. There, as in the pontifical, the deacon is said to be ordained vaguely for ministry, while Hippolytus says explicitly "for the service of the bishop".[2] Examples of such service are bringing in the lamp for the bishop to bless before a church feast for the poor[3] and reporting to the bishop the names of the sick so that the bishop can visit them.[4]

In the way Hippolytus seems to put deacons in their place there may be indication that already the close association of deacons with the bishop had led them to have too high an opinion of their status and dignity. Before examining the ways they were held to have offended in this in the first centuries, let us look at the question of the deacon as reader of the gospel and as preacher. No doubt in small places deacons may often have chanted the psalms and read the lessons, but many of the churches had chanters and readers. At Carthage at least in Cyprian's day the reader read the gospel.[5] How

[1] Dix, op. cit., pp. 6, 40; also *Council of Ancyra*, 314 A.D., canon 2.
[2] Botte, op. cit., p. 10; Van der Eynde in *Miscellanea Liturgica in honorem L. C. Mohlberg* (1948), i, 407 f.
[3] *Ap. Trad.*, sect. 26.
[4] Ibid., sect. 30.
[5] Migne, *P.L.*, iv, 332. Ep. 34.

general or ancient this was is not known; but it is likely that the deacon already in the 3rd century had begun to pocket the privilege of reading the gospel, and that in the East presbyters and bishops, at least on great occasions, were not content to leave so notable a function even to deacons. With respect to preaching, Ephrem Syrus, *c.* 306–73, who was never more than a deacon, has left us famous metrical homilies; but Ambrose[1] says that deacons did not preach in his day. Origen preached in Palestine before his ordination as presbyter, presumably as layman or reader, at the request of the bishops there, a recognized custom in Palestine; but his own bishop, Demetrius of Alexandria, was incensed.[2] Origen had sat under Hippolytus at Rome, and so may have known of the daily early morning assembly of the clergy, especially the deacons,[3] and of the people themselves who could manage it,[4] for instruction. Whether a deacon or catechist could address such an assembly is uncertain. At Rome the learned Novatian himself did so.[5] In these early days we may take it a deacon had to be a man of very special talents, if his bishop was to invite him not only to teach catechumens but preach to the people in his presence.

In his 12th letter, as given in Migne, Cyprian directs that, if a presbyter cannot be found, a deacon may hear the confessions of those who have lapsed in the persecution if they are by sickness in danger of death, "that with the imposition of hands upon them for repentance they should come to the Lord with the peace which the martyrs have desired by their letters to us to be granted to them". Leclercq[6] cannot bring himself to believe that this is a case of "sacramental absolution". H. Thurston[7] declares certain Roman theologians have not hesitated to say it is so. To round off the evidence from Cyprian, he himself was presbyter before he became bishop. E. W. Benson[8] thought it likely he was deacon before he was presbyter. Deacons could, but more often did not, at this period become either presbyter or bishop; but it was not yet a rule that all presbyters and bishops had to be ordained to the lesser orders before embracing the higher.

The Council of Arles in 314 brings us to the presumptions of deacons. Canon 15 forbids categorically deacons to offer (*sc.* the eucharist). During the Diocletian persecution a certain number of deacons, especially when no bishop or presbyter was available, seem to have acted, as Tertullian[9] envisaged a layman might act in exceptional circumstances. They had presided at the eucharist. The church's mind later settled against this. In No. 18 of the canons of the Council of Nicaea in 325 it is said baldly "deacons have not the power to offer"; and it goes on to reprobate deacons communicating presbyters, even themselves receiving the eucharist before bishops. It

[1] *Comm. in Eph.*, 4. [2] *Origen*, by Daniélou, E.T. (1955), pp. 20–3.
[3] *Ap. Trad.*, sect. 33. [4] Ibid., sect. 35. 2.
[5] Ante-Nicene Library, 13, p. 253, *De Bono Pudicitiae*, sect. 1; on this see Quasten, *Patrology* (1953), ii, 225. [6] *D.A.C.L.*, iv, 1, 743.
[7] *Cath. Enc.* (1908), iv, art. "Deacons". [8] *Cyprian* (1897), p. 18.
[9] *De exhort. cast.*, 7.

demands that deacons keep within their accustomed bounds, and receive the eucharist from the bishop whose servants they are, or from the presbyters whose inferiors they are. The deacons are not to sit among the presbyters. If any will not obey, let him cease to act as deacon. Laodicea, canon 20, orders a deacon not to seat himself in the presence of a presbyter, but to sit down at the bidding of a presbyter, and deacons are to have like respect paid them by those in minor orders. Canon 15 at Nicaea stresses the importance and stability of local churches in demanding that bishop, presbyter and deacon remained in the place where they were ordained and were not translated to another diocese. Canon 16 declared null and void *(ἄκυρος)* the ordination of anyone belonging to another diocese without the consent of its bishop. Demetrius had been incensed at Origen's ordination in Palestine, and Origen had to go and live in Palestine, but the ordination itself was not challenged. Cyprian was enraged that Novatian had dared to ordain a man deacon while on a visit to North Africa. But the Nicaean canon was not yet the rule, and later Western theories of indelibility were not envisaged by its makers.

Now for Ignatius, that early bishop of Antioch, with such a zeal, craze, for martyrdom that it is a question how healthy minded he was, though one drops one's eyes in reverence before his witness and his death. We have kept the most heady wine for the stirrup cup. Ignatius indeed is one on whom there is difference of opinion. Soi-disant catholics exalt him and hanker after taking soberly as an outburst of the heart of the church's faith his extraordinary explosions. The much reformed desire to interview him after a douche of cold water has cooled his ardours.

Ignatius calls deacons, and only deacons, his co-slaves. This restriction is peculiar to him. His fervent affection puts him alongside these episcopal assistants in their service to the church.[1] Other churches sent their deacons to him to wait on him and be useful to him, e.g. Burrhus,[2] who was loaned by the Ephesians and Smyrnaeans and who at Troas acted as his amanuensis. He urges the Philadelphians to send a deacon to Antioch as God's ambassador to congratulate them on the ending of its persecution. The nearer churches had already sent bishops or presbyters or deacons to augment and participate in their joy at their deliverance.[3] Deacons are referred to in 6 out of his 7 epistles, and most of the references are concerned with Ignatius's ecstatic desires for the unity and cohesion of the churches by submission and cleaving to the hierarchy. "Shun divisions, as the beginning of evils. Do ye all follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbytery as the apostles; and to the deacons pay respect, as to God's commandment."[4] The authority of God, his commands, come through the mouths of the bishops, and those mouths can be the bishop's delegates, the deacons. The submission of the deacon himself is portrayed in *Magn.* 2, "the

[1] *Eph.* 2, *Magn.* 2, *Philad.* 4, *Smyrn.* 12. [2] *Eph.* 2, *Philad.* 11, *Smyrn.* 12.
[3] *Philad.* 12. [4] *Smyrn.* 8; cf. *Trall.* 13, see also *Trall.* 7 and *Polyc.* 6.

deacon Zotion, of whom I would fain have joy, for that he is subject to the bishop as unto the grace of God and to the presbytery as unto the law of Jesus Christ". It is not only the people who are told to be to the bishop as Christ is to the Father, but as possibly in the *Ap. Trad.* and certainly in the *Didascalia* the deacon himself is as the Son. "Those likewise who are deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ must please all men in all ways. For they are not deacons of meats and drinks but servants of the church of God. . . . In like manner let all men respect the deacons as Jesus Christ, even as they respect the bishop as being a type of the Father and the presbyters as the council of God and as the college of the apostles."[1] In Polycarp's letter to the Philippians, ch. 5, we get something akin, "Deacons should be blameless in the presence of his righteousness, as deacons of God and Christ and not of men, . . . walking according to the truth of the Lord who became a deacon of all."[2] The symbolism has not proved generally acceptable. The Syriac version of *Magn.* 6 has altered it.[3] It is of course a great idea to see in the relationships within the church reflections of the fontal relations within the Trinity, even if one refuses to put the relation between Christ and the apostles in such close proximity to them. Ignatius is determined to engrace, theologize, evangelize the relation of the people and their leaders, as to-day the parson sometimes is set on expressing it in the terms of family affection. Good is done, and little harm, if a welter of relationships are so treated, and in a welter of analogies. Danger arises when a small set of such relations and analogies becomes dominant and obsessive, and the analogies are taken as much more than analogies, involving indeed an immodest measure of identification.

One turns one's eyes back from all this to the amazing wealth of new ministries, permanent and temporary, that have arisen among us to meet new situations, e.g. readers, church army captains, church commissioners, church councillors. The question will be whether the 2nd-century pattern of bishop, presbyters and deacons is the from age-to-age nucleus of the church's ministry, so that all full-time ministries of organization and good works should be included in, linked to, subordinate to the diaconate; or whether the scale on which the church militant now exists means rightly a modification of it into a teaching, praying, pastoral presbytery of various degrees and orders, and a vast number of organized recognized lay officers amidst many unorganized and unrecognized ministries, with intercession being made in the church on behalf of all in their several vocations for aid, grace and blessing, the Spirit's coming from heaven in Christ for the discharge of the duties that mature and ennoble the children of God and train them *a minore ad maiorem* for their status and service in Christ hereafter at the regeneration and perfecting of all that shall come to the magnificence of the fullness of life eternal.

R. P. Symonds.

[1] *Trall.* 2–3; cf. *Magn.* 6.
[2] Lightfoot, *Apost. Fathers* (1889), iii, 473.
[3] Ibid., ii, 120.

Deacons in the Orthodox East

THE *terminus a quo* of this article is the year 337, when the Emperor Constantine died. From that time the Eastern and Western Churches began to follow more or less independent lines of development. It is obviously impossible in a few pages to deal adequately with the evolution of the diaconate in the Orthodox Churches. Its history has been complicated, and many aspects of it raise problems that are still unsolved. All I propose to do here is to make some introductory remarks, both historical and practical, on the Orthodox diaconate.

When the Eastern Empire was constituted in 337, the diaconate was already a well-established and flourishing institution. It might even be said that it was going through a period of inflation, since the Council of Neocaesarea in 314 had, by its 15th canon, forbidden the ordination of more than seven deacons for a local church, however important it might be. But the regulations of Neocaesarea did not stop the development of the Eastern diaconate. At Alexandria, early in the 4th century, nine deacons became arians, which implies that the diaconate there was of considerable size. The church of Edessa in 451 had thirty-nine deacons. The Emperor Justinian (*regnabat* 527–65) forbade the church of Constantinople to have more than 100 deacons; all the same, in 692 this church had 150.[1] Thus the growth of the diaconate showed itself, primarily, in an increase of numbers; but there was also an extension of the functions of deacons. There were three principal reasons for this. First, the "service of tables" became an elaborately organized system of charitable distribution, almost a bureaucracy. Secondly, this organization tended to become the administrative body of the local church; the diaconate was very closely associated with the bishop and to some extent put the presbyterate in the shade. It provided an opportunity for the exercise of power, and in some cases attracted power-seekers. Thirdly, the "service of tables" was gradually transformed into a service of the eucharistic table. As ritual and ceremonial developed, the liturgical aspect of the diaconate became preponderant.

These three aspects of the diaconate—charitable, administrative, and liturgical—give it a composite character, hardly capable of exact definition and extremely flexible. We will consider briefly the three lines of development that have just been indicated. We shall see that development was rapid to the end of the Middle Ages, but that there then began a period of restriction and decline which affected each of its three aspects. The result is that the contemporary Orthodox diaconate, reduced as it is in both its numbers and functions, is a feeble reflection of what it was in its prime.

The diaconate was in the first place a charitable office for the distribution of provisions and alms. This primitive work continued for a long time in the Orthodox East. At Antioch and Alexandria, at

[1] See acts of the Council *in Trullo* (692). On the development of the diaconate in the early Eastern Church, see the article "Diacre" in Cabrol and Leclercq, *D.A.C.L.*, iv, part 1.

Jerusalem and Constantinople, no less than at Rome, the atrium of the basilicas was the seat of mercy and benevolence. St John Chrysostom urges his hearers to give alms to the beggars who gathered at the church doors.[1] The Law of 321, which made the Church a legal person, had led to the multiplication of charitable gifts and legacies. The church of Antioch supported 3,000 poor people out of the revenues of a single bequest, without taking into account what was daily distributed to prisoners, the sick, and foreigners.[2] St John the Almoner, patriarch of Alexandria—whose church owned a small merchant fleet—fed as many as 7,500 people daily.[3] Hospitals and refuges of all kinds abounded in Constantinople.[4] The deacons were in charge of all this, and it soon became necessary to have "social centres" (as we call them now) attached to the churches. The deacon thus became not a distributor of alms but an *oeconomus*, *οἰκονόμος*. It is in this connexion that the deaconries or "institutes of charity" came into existence; they were a feature of Palestine, Egypt and Byzantine Italy, and eventually Roman cardinalatial titles were derived from them.[5]

How was it that the charitable work of the Eastern deacons came to an end? In modern states of the Soviet type, where the majority of the population is Orthodox, freedom of worship is guaranteed to believers, but charitable activities, whether parochial or diocesan, are prohibited, so here the question does not arise. In those states, which were or still profess to be Orthodox, civil government has gradually taken over the social services. This process began very early, actually at Constantinople, with Justinian's philanthropic legislation and organization. It must not be forgotten that the Byzantine Empire was a carefully supervised "welfare state".[6] In any case, the Orthodox Church has always tended to identify itself with the state to which it has left the direction of temporal affairs. To-day she is experiencing the consequences of that attitude. In states which were Moslem or in which Islam was predominant, charitable work passed from the hands of ecclesiastical administrators into the hands

[1] *De paenit*, hom. III, 2; Migne, *P.G.*, xlix, col. 294.
[2] Chrysostom, *Comm. in Matth.*, LXVI; *P.G.*, lviii, col. 629 f.
[3] *Acta sanctorum*, 23 January, pp. 528 f.
[4] On the organization of charity in the early Church, see H. Bolkstein, *ΞΕΝΩΝ, Gastverbliff, Pelgrimsherberg, Armhuis*, in the *Medeelingen* of the Academy of Sciences of Amsterdam, 1937.
[5] The history of the deaconries, which Duchesne originally worked out, has had much fresh light thrown on it by the recent researches of H. I. Marrou in *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'Ecole française de Rome*, Paris, 1940. In the East the deaconries were each a collection of property and buildings belonging to a church or monastery and set apart for various charitable purposes. These centres were often managed by a *διακοιτῆς*, i.e. a superintendent who was not in deacon's orders. The Eastern deaconries rapidly acquired legal personality. Deaconries made their appearance at Rome—as well as at Naples and Ravenna—during the period of Greek influence, when a large number of popes of graeco-oriental origin succeeded one another (eleven out of thirteen between 678 and 751) and Eastern monasteries were being established in the city. The chapel or church of the deaconry became later the *titulus* of a cardinal deacon.
[6] Cp. the *Ἐπαρχικὸν βιβλίον* of Leo the Philosopher.

of the delegates of that specifically Eastern entity (which is half-religious and half-political): the "community". In these countries, e.g. at Damascus or at Beirut, it is the "community"—Orthodox, Jacobite, Armenian, etc., as the case may be—represented by laymen whose vote is decisive, that administers hospitals, schools and charitable foundations. Deacons have nothing whatever to do with this. It is the job of laymen to deal with offerings made in church. All these factors go to explain the disappearance of the Orthodox diaconate in so far as it was a charitable institution. Nevertheless, the Orthodox Church itself was mainly responsible. The lamentable dissociation of the diaconate from the "service of tables" could not have taken place if the Church, in the course of its history, had not been more anxious to accumulate wealth than to give it away, more preoccupied with adorning temples than with feeding the hungry, and so little inclined to wish, with St John Chrysostom, that the generous distribution of alms might empty its treasury.[1]

While the charitable activities of the deacons were narrowing, their administrative functions were expanding. This is the second aspect of their ministry: their part in church government. From about the end of the 3rd century one deacon, among those of each local church, can be seen acquiring a certain pre-eminence: the "bishop's deacon". Deacons were generally young and enterprising. They were the bishop's immediate and confidential collaborators. He charged them with special missions and duties of inspection, and often enough the presbyters, who were elderly and retiring, fell into the background. With the Council of Ephesus in 431 the archdeacon came on the scene, a sort of diocesan vicar-general. His authority was to increase until by the 8th century, in several churches, he was becoming the rival and opponent of the bishop.[2] In contrast to what happened in the West, the office of archdeacon in the Orthodox East was never entrusted to a priest. In the monasteries and churches with several deacons, the senior in age was the proto-deacon. "Archdeacon" and "proto-deacon" signified not only titles and offices; they were degrees in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and archdeacons had a special rite of institution.[3]

Practically nothing of the diaconate's ecclesiastical authority remains to-day. An archdeacon may still be found associated with some bishop, and a proto-deacon in monasteries and in important parish churches. But they have no executive powers. Their work is chiefly secretarial. They keep registers and accounts, attend to correspond-

[1] See *D.A.C.L.*, article "Charité", iii, part 1, col. 647.

[2] The archidiaconate was considered so important that sometimes the ordination of an archdeacon to the priesthood was looked on as a step down. At Alexandria (see Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.*, vii, 19) the archdeacon had the privilege of reading the Gospel in the cathedral. At Constantinople the archdeacon was an official of the imperial court (Cadinus, *De officiis Constant.*, xvii, 38). On archdeacons, see P. A. Leder, *Die Diakonen der Bischöfe und Presbyter und ihre urchristlichen Vorläufer. Untersuchungen über die Vorgeschichte und die Anfänge des Archidiakonats*, Stuttgart, 1905.

[3] See Goar, *ΕΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ*, Venice, 1730, p. 235. This rite is very short and contains nothing of interest to theologians or liturgists.

ence, and assist the ecclesiastical tribunals. They naturally take precedence of ordinary deacons in liturgical functions.

We come now to this third or liturgical aspect of the ministry of deacons. In point of fact, the office of deacon in contemporary Orthodoxy is chiefly a ritual one. Already in the 6th century Pseudo-Dionysius defines the diaconate by its liturgical functions.[1] While it is the priest's office to "enlighten" and the bishop's to "bring to perfection", the deacon's is to "purify", to separate what is sacred from what is profane, to see that holy objects are treated with respect, and to prepare candidates for full Christian initiation. This ministry of purification, according to Pseudo-Dionysius, is in evidence in all the rites in which the deacon takes part. The neo-platonic speculations of the *corpus dyonisiacum* had no influence on the theory or practice of the diaconate, and no attempt was ever made to base a theology of the diaconate on them. But the deacon's part in the Orthodox liturgy ought to be closely considered.

The part he played was important and it has continued to be so. At the services of baptism, of chrismation (or confirmation), of marriage, of the unction of the sick, and of ordination, the deacon has his place beside the bishop and the priest. He assists them in certain actions and in the recitation of litanies. He can baptize in the priest's absence and with the bishop's consent.

Formerly, in public penance, the deacon could, if necessary, take the place of the priest by the side of a sinner in danger of death and reconcile him to the Church. It seems certain that in the early and middle ages, some deacons heard private confessions and pronounced absolution.[2] But these practices are not provided for in present-day Orthodox discipline.

It is in the Eucharist that the deacon principally exercises his liturgical ministry. At one time, the deacon himself gave communion in both kinds; to-day he only wipes the lips of those who have communicated. He used also to take the Eucharist to the absent. Did deacons ever consecrate the Eucharist?[3] This is a difficult historical

[1] *De eccles. hierarch.*; Migne, *P.G.*, iii, *passim*.

[2] In the Byzantine East the direction of consciences and confession followed by absolution were so much combined that it is impossible to trace a strict line between them. Monks, whether priests, deacons or laymen, constantly intervened in penitential discipline. See K. Holl, *Enthusiasmus und Bussgewalt beim griechischen Mönchtum*, Leipzic, 1898, and Laurain, *De l'intervention des laïques, des diacres et des abbesses dans l'administration de la pénitence*, Paris, 1899.

[3] The Calvinist theologian Basnage (†1725) maintained that they did, on the basis of three arguments. (1) The phrase which St Ambrose attributes to St Laurence when the latter said to St Sixtus: *cui commisisti dominici sanguinis consecrationem . . . huic sanguinis tui consortium negas?* (2) A phrase of St Jerome according to which deacons had been deprived of power to consecrate by the Council of Nicea. (3) Analogous canons of the 1st Synod of Arles and of the 1st Synod of Ancyra. The first argument relies on the authenticity of the phrase attributed to the deacon Laurence, which is in fact doubtful. The other two arguments have some weight. If someone is deprived of a power, the implication is that the power has been exercised. There is no question of the eucharistic consecration's having been normally entrusted to deacons, but it is not out of the question that some deacons arrogated this power to themselves. See the article "Diacres" (from a Protestant point of view) in the *Dict. des*

question to which it seems impossible to give a certain answer. Whatever was the case in the past, the present role of the deacon in the celebration of the Orthodox eucharistic liturgy is both important and complicated. On the one hand, the deacon "serves" the priest (or bishop), who in turn "serves" God in the liturgy. In his capacity as assistant to, or representative of, the priest, the deacon receives the offerings, censes, gives certain instructions to the faithful, reads the Gospel and may deliver a homily. While the priest reads in a low voice his own special prayers the deacon leads the faithful in litanies.[1] On the other hand, the deacon is in a certain sense the representative of the faithful *vis-à-vis* the priest; for instance, several times in the course of the liturgy he peremptorily requests the priest to perform such and such a ritual action. The liturgy can of course be celebrated without a deacon, and most priests have no deacon available. But the participation of a deacon in the liturgy is still what the Church intends.

It cannot be said that the nature of the deacon's office comes out at all clearly in the ritual of the eucharistic liturgy. Indeed, it may be that the deacon's role in the liturgy—as reader and preacher, as chief beadle and bursar, as assistant to the priest or bishop—nicely expresses the ambiguity and inconclusiveness of the historical evidence regarding this office. It is no use trying to clarify the "mystery of the diaconate" by studying the rite of ordination of a deacon,[2] because at no point in the service is the nature of the diaconate defined with any precision.[3] All the same, we are, as it were, given a clue by several references to St Stephen and by the prayer that the "grace of Stephen" may be given to the new deacon. This is characteristic of Orthodoxy. While the institutional side of the diaconate is left vague, its essence is conceived as a spiritual and interior

sciences religieuses of Lichtenberger and (from a Roman point of view) in the *Dict. de théologie catholique* of Vacant and Mangenot.

[1] When there is a deacon, he reads the prayers in the litany (*συναπτή, ἐκτενῆς*), of which the priest says only the concluding one (*ἐκφώνησις*). During the preparation of the elements, the deacon pours the wine and water into the chalice, etc. He carries the Book of the Gospels. After the liturgy, he consumes what remains of the consecrated elements. On the order of the liturgy and the evolution of its text, see F. E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, Vol. I, Oxford, 1896, and P. de Meester, *Les origines et les développements du texte grec de la liturgie de S. Jean Chrysostome* in *Χρυσοστομικα*, part 2, Rome, 1908. An English translation by Patrick Thompson of the liturgies of St John Chrysostom and of St Basil was published by S.P.C.K. in 1939.

[2] For the *textus receptus* of this rite, see Goar, op. cit., p. 208, who gives variant readings from some MSS.

[3] This lack of precision is found in other ordination rites beside that of the deacon. Perhaps the least precise Orthodox ordination is that of the bishop: there is a great deal about the gift of grace, but there is no clear indication of the proper functions of a bishop. There is also, in Orthodox thought, a lack of precision about the actual nature of holy orders. Do the presbyterate and the diaconate impress an indelible character on whoever receives them, or are they only a commission which can at any time be revoked? Both views have their supporters. The idea of an indelible character has had its chief advocates among Greek theologians, and that of a revocable commission among Russian theologians. The question was discussed at the Russian General Council of 1917–18. It is still an open question.

reality, a grace connected with that received by the first martyr-deacon. The best way of approaching the Orthodox Church's conception of the "grace of Stephen" is to refer to the office for his feast (26 December). The *τροπάριον* for the feast alludes to the Martyrdom of Stephen and so does not directly apply to all deacons; but the *κοντάκιον*, with beautifully balanced phrases, emphasizes the radical humility of this deacon or "servant" who died in his flesh as soon as his Lord and King had come in the flesh (a reference to Christmas, 25 December) and who carried his "service" to the length of dying for his Master.[1] Stephen's grace, the deacon's grace, is then the grace of "him who serves", whatever may have been the practical form of his *διακόνια*, including the possibility of martyrdom. This idea of the diaconate transcends the restricted ideas of serving tables, of serving the community, and of serving the eucharistic table; essentially it is the total service of Jesus Christ, "the suffering Servant".

What is likely to be the future of the Orthodox diaconate? In so far as it was a charitable institution it has been replaced by other organizations. In so far as it was a form of ecclesiastical administration, it is steadily losing its meaning. As a liturgical institution it is becoming rare and is not considered by everyone to be desirable. Few parishes are financially capable of supporting a deacon, and the faithful often look upon a deacon as a useless luxury. Priests sometimes regard a deacon as an incumbrance. In places where appreciation of the liturgy is growing, the priest reads aloud the prayers called "secret" and the faithful do not want a deacon to come between them and the prayers of the priest. Candidates for the permanent diaconate (the old Orthodox tradition was that a deacon remained a deacon throughout his life) are to-day few and far between, and in some respects the disappearance of the professional diaconate is not a matter for regret.[2] Permanent deacons may remain in some monasteries, for they fit in well with monastic life. Probably bishops will continue to have deacons by them, but already the deacons who reside in bishops' palaces are usually young men who intend to become priests and who are serving a kind of liturgical

[1] The *τροπάριον* and the *κοντάκιον* are short liturgical sentences that are read or chanted during the divine office. The *κοντάκιον* of St Stephen is as follows: "Yesterday the Lord came in the flesh and to-day the servant has departed in his flesh. Yesterday the King was born in the flesh and to-day the servant is stoned for his sake, and for his sake did pass away."

[2] Strictly speaking, a young man is not ordained deacon before his twenty-fifth year, nor sub-deacon before his twentieth year. In practice dispensations are allowed. A married man can become a deacon, but may not marry after ordination. The professionalism in mind is that which looks upon a deacon as primarily a cantor. This error was common in Imperial Russia, where the first quality the public required in a deacon was a powerful bass voice. To some young men it was a matter of indifference whether they became deacons or opera singers. It is a good thing to be finished with that type of deacon. Does the future of the diaconate lie in preaching? I think not, because Orthodox priests are increasingly given to preaching themselves, and also because in the Orthodox Church not only a priest or a deacon but a reader or layman can exercise the ministry of the word.

apprenticeship with the bishop. The bishop is more often assisted in his administrative work by priests and lay officials. For students in theological colleges, the diaconate is only a stage of preparation for the priesthood. Parochial deacons also, if they have the necessary education, are often aiming at the priesthood; during their diaconate they engage in preaching and teaching. In short, everything suggests that, apart from monasteries, the permanent diaconate is bound to disappear more or less quickly and to give way to a temporary diaconate, a step towards the presbyterate.

This need not be regretted for the deacons themselves, since the grace of priesthood added to that of the diaconate is greater than that of the diaconate alone, but only on one condition. The diaconate must not be merely a preliminary stage. The young deacon ought to have a real experience of the grace of Stephen—the grace of the servant who offers himself even unto death. This grace is obtained principally at the eucharistic table in contact with a bishop or a priest, provided that their liturgical ministry tends to become an abyss of adoration and sacrifice. The collaboration of priest and deacon at the holy table is an intimate mystery; in the course of the liturgy there pass between them moving words and actions.[1] These are infinitely precious moments when the deacon (and the priest too) can receive what no theological meditation can give. A priest who celebrates the Lord's Supper in spirit and in truth silently moulds his deacon—and is moulded by him in return. The modern diaconate, which is more or less restricted to the liturgical mystery, has its point in these supreme moments. The service of the deacon and that of the priest will reach their consummation when these two servants perceive that, by them, *amor sacerdos immolat.*

LEV GILLET.

Deacons in the Latin West since the Fourth Century

AT the beginning of the 4th century the diaconate had already become a step in the ecclesiastical *cursus honorum*; a false decretal attributes the arrangement of the ecclesiastical *cursus* to Pope Gaius

[1] E.g. at one point the deacon, having invoked God's blessing on the priest, bows towards him and asks his prayers; the priest replies: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." Then the deacon says: "The same Spirit shall work with us all the days of our life." Or again, when the deacon has received the precious blood, the priest says: "Lo, this hath touched thy lips: and thine iniquity shall be taken away and thy sin purged." Woe to the priest and deacon who treat such words as mere liturgical forms! They enclose and express a charismatic ministry. Priest and deacon become one in the Spirit. It is the deepening of this experience as an introduction to the priesthood that seems to me to offer to the modern diaconate the richest possibilities. The deacon should learn from the priest that the liturgy stabs a sinner's heart; and the priest, through his sense of the freshness and generosity with which the young deacon is sacrificing himself, should feel a renewal of his own sacrificial oblation in union with the passion of the Saviour.

(d. 296).[1] Popes Siricius (*c.* 385), St Innocent (416), and St Zosimus (417) insisted on adherence to this orderly progression through the lesser orders to the higher.[2]

The assigning of ages at which a cleric could be promoted from one order to another was the work of Pope Zosimus: twenty-five was to be the minimum age for receiving the diaconate, and thirty for the priesthood.[3] Promotion to the priesthood after five years in the diaconate was hereafter the normal and regular practice—so much so that it is referred to in the central prayer of the rite of ordination to the diaconate—a prayer (probably composed by Pope St Leo) which has continued in use throughout the centuries to the present day; it concludes with the words: "And by thy grace may they [the new deacons] deserve to rise by due degrees from the lower rank to receive what is higher."[4]

Since the beginning of the 5th century, therefore, deacons in the West have for the most part been young men of between twenty-five and thirty years of age, looking forward to promotion to the priesthood. But inscriptions from tombs and occasional literary records remind us that some deacons did *not* proceed to higher orders. Sixth-century epitaphs from Gaul show that clerics could die as deacons at the age of fifty-eight, sixty, seventy or eighty;[5] and Alcuin (d. 804), perhaps out of humility, seems never to have been ordained to the priesthood.[6] A more frequent reason for declining the honour of such promotion was the desire to retain some administrative employment which belonged to the diaconate or archidiaconate, as will be seen below.

During the first four centuries, the number of deacons in the Roman church was limited to seven out of respect for the apostolic precedent of Acts 6. A decretal attributed to Pope Evaristus (d. 107) prescribed that the same custom should be followed in every diocese.[7] Pope Fabian (d. 250) is credited with the division of Rome into seven

[1] *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, I, p. 161: "Hic constituit ut ordines omnes in ecclesia sic ascenderentur: si quis episcopus mereretur, ut esset ostarius, lector, exorcista, sequens, subdiaconus, diaconus, presbyter, et exinde episcopus ordinaretur."

[2] Siric., *Ep. I ad Himer.*, 14 (*PL* 13, 1143); Innoc. I, *Ep. XXXI* (*PL* 20, 604); Zosimus, *Ep. IX*, 1, 2 (*PL* 20, 671); cf. Gratian, *Decretum*, d. LXI, 10.

[3] Zosimus, loc. cit.; cf. Rhabanus Maurus, *De Cler. Inst.*, I, xiii (*PL* 107, 306). The Pontifical of Durandus (the prototype of the Roman Pontifical), completed about 1295, reduced the age-requirement to twenty for deacons and twenty-five for priests. The Council of Trent, Sess. XXIII, xii, made it twenty-three for deacons and twenty-five for priests.

[4] "Dignisque successibus de inferiori gradu per gratiam tuam capere potiora mereantur"—*Leonine Sacramentary*, ed. C. L. Feltoe, p. 122; *Gelasian Sacramentary*, ed. H. A. Wilson, p. 27; *Gregorian Sacramentary*, ed. H. A. Wilson, p. 8.

[5] Cf. H. Leclercq, Art. "Diacre" in Cabrol, *Dict. d'Arch. chrét. et de Lit.*, Paris, 1916, p. 734.

[6] Cf. *Vita B. Alcuini*, cap. 13 (*PL* 100, 104): "Dominica porro die . . . velociter levitice se praeparans suo cum Singulfo presbytero missarum colebat solemnia specialium usque horam tertiam: et tunc nimia cum reverentia intrabat ad missam."

[7] P. Hinschius, *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae*, Leipsig, 1863, p. 87: "in unaquaque civitate iuxta apostolorum constituta septem debent esse."

diaconal regions, each under one of the seven deacons;[1] and Pope Gaius is said to have ordered that the same be done in every city.[2]

A simple mathematical calculation will show that if these arrangements had been adhered to—if no diocese had ever had more than seven deacons and these all held office for the statutory period of five years—the number of priests in a diocese could rarely have been much above fifty. Very significantly, Pope Cornelius (d. 253) is recorded as having had seven deacons and forty-four priests.[3] This was no doubt a sufficiency of priests at a period when the parish system had not yet developed; but as the Church expanded, it must have become evident that if the diaconate was always to be a college of seven and never more, it would prove an awkward bottle-neck. Nevertheless, attempts to increase the number were at first resisted: the Council of Neocaesarea in 314 felt it necessary to issue a canon forbidding the ordaining of more than seven deacons even in great cities.[4] But in time, bishops no doubt found that practical necessity forced their hands. In Rome itself, in addition to the seven *diaconi regionarii* we find *diaconi stationarii* and *martyrarii* appearing—to take charge of stational churches and tombs of the martyrs. In the year 520 Rome had a hundred deacons.[5]

There appears never to have been rivalry among deacons for promotion to the priesthood. So long as the number seven was maintained, the comparative rarity of the diaconal dignity enhanced its value in the common estimation; and when the restriction was removed, it was probably removed for the very purpose of making more people available for ordination to the priesthood. In a famous letter to Evagrius, St Jerome explains that the fewness of the deacons even led them to rank themselves above the priests;[6] their close association with the bishop[7] and their charge of temporalities likwise tended to give them and the people an exaggerated estimation of their importance. Several Councils of the Church had to remind deacons of their inferiority to the priests in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.[8] The Council of Nicea gives us an interesting echo of contemporary controversy when it says that "deacons are ministers (or servants) of the bishop, but are inferior to the priests".[9] One can almost overhear the deacons arguing that they are called "deacons" in relation to the

[1] Hinschius, p. 157.
[2] Hinschius, p. 218: "per singulas urbes quae populose fuerint."
[3] Euseb., *Hist. Eccl.*, VI, 43.
[4] Conc. Neocaes., cn 15; cf. *Testamentum D.N.I.C.*, ed. Rahmani, Mainz, 1899, p. 82.
[5] Leclercq, art. cit., p. 742; cf. Ps.-Dionysius, *De Eccl. Hier.*, cap. III (*PG* 3, 426), with the comment of Maximus, *PG* 4, 135.
[6] Hieron., *Ep. CXLVI* (*PL* 22, 1194): "Omne quod rarum est plus appetitur. Pulegium apud Indos pipere pretiosius est. Diaconos paucitas honorabiles, presbyteros turba contemptibiles facit."
[7] Ps.-Aug., *Quaest. utriusque Test.*, q. 101 (*PL* 35, 2301–3).
[8] Cf. L. Thomassinus, *Vetus et Nova Ecclesiae Disciplina circa Beneficia*, Mainz, 1787, II, pp. 212–13.
[9] Conc. Nicaenum, cn 18 (Interpretatio Attici, ed. Turner, Oxford, 1904, p. 138): "Maneant diaconi in proprio ordine, scientes quod episcoporum quidem ministri sunt, presbiteris autem inferiores existunt."

bishop and *not* in relation to the priests! The Council appears to concede this point, and to envisage the diaconate not as directly subordinate to the priesthood in the same way as the priesthood is to the episcopacy, but rather as being co-ordinate with the priesthood (though not of equal dignity) and directly subordinate to the episcopacy. Thus:

This way of conceiving things was not to be maintained;[1] but it may perhaps help us to understand why the relationship between deacons and parish-priests has never been clearly defined.

Before the period of decentralization of worship from the cathedral to the parish churches, the deacons maintained very close contact with their bishop. They served as a bodyguard "lest he be molested by secret attack",[2] and protected him from the malevolence of his enemies.[3] They were also called his "eyes"[4] because they kept a watch over public morals, the condition of the poor and the arrival of pilgrims and strangers, so as to report anything of interest to the bishop.[5]

The duties assigned to deacons, or to any particular deacon, were determined by the will of the bishop and could vary considerably from diocese to diocese.[6] We read in the life of Alcuin that after his ordination to the diaconate, he went to his Bishop Elcbert and asked him what he was to do. Elcbert told him to make a journey to Rome and return by way of Gaul, in order to combat the Adoptionist heresy that was rampant there and defend the true doctrine of the Trinity.[7] But this was not typical. Usually the bishops appear to have followed the precedents afforded by the deacons of Acts 6 and by the Levites of the Old Testament. Acts 6 provided the precedent for giving them control of the collection and distribution of alms to the poor; from the charity sermons of Pope St Leo we learn that the Romans of his day were asked at regular intervals to give in their contributions at the seven diaconal churches for the support of the sick and the poor.[8] Various passages of the Book of Numbers

[1] Cf. e.g. Statuta Eccles. Antiqua, cn 37 (Mansi 3, 954): "Diaconus ita se presbyteris ut episcopis ministrum noverit"; Ps.-Alcuin, *De Div. Off.*, *PL* 101, 1235: "Minister, quia ministrat presbytero."

[2] Hinschius, p. 87.

[3] Hinschius, p. 70.

[4] *Const. Apost.*, II, 44.

[5] Ep. Ps.-Clementis, Hinschius, p. 34, and *PG* 56, 736. This letter, translated into Latin by Rufinus, was accepted as genuine and commended by the Council of Vaison in A.D. 442 (Conc. Vasense, cn 6, Labbe, I, 1788).

[6] Cf. Thomassinus, op. cit., II, p. 149: "Hinc illa incredibilis varietas inter diversarum ecclesiarum diaconos, qui ea iura obtinent, quae illis olim ab episcopis concredita sunt, et consuetudinis postea adminiculo roborata."

[7] *Vita B. Alcuini*, cap. 7 (*PL* 100, 96–7).

[8] Cf. *PL* 54, 155–6; Ep. Ps.-Clementis, *PL* 56, 763.

provided the precedent for giving them the care of church property, plate and other treasures—for example: "And they [the Levites] shall be the ministers of their brethren in the tabernacle of the Covenant, to keep the things that are committed to their care: but not to do the works."[1] The prohibition against Levites "doing the works" may be the explanation of why, in spite of the precedent afforded by Philip in Acts 8, the deacons were not allowed to baptize except in extraordinary circumstances.[2]

As ministers to their brethren in the tabernacle of the Lord, the deacons assisted the bishop when he celebrated on major feast days,[3] to enhance the solemnity of the proceedings, to provide a sort of screen between the celebrant and the people "lest they see what they ought not to see",[4] and to emphasize the exalted position of the celebrant by acting as intermediaries between him and the people and separating them from direct contact with him. At the offertory they received the gifts from the people to pass them to the bishop. At the Communion, in the time of Justin and of Cyprian they had performed the office of administering the chalice and sometimes also the Host to the communicants, but this honour was soon to be curtailed.[5] For many centuries it remained the custom for the chalice to be ministered by a deacon even to priests and bishops; Durandus (*c.* 1290) records this as being still canonically correct, but he adds that it had become obsolete: "we have never seen it observed".[6] The deacon's special care over the chalice probably arose from consideration of the levitical precedents in the Book of Numbers.[7] From very early times until the present day it has also been the deacons' privilege to chant the gospel at Mass, but, as the Carolingian liturgist Amalarius observes, this was not part of their office from the very beginning, since "when Stephen was made deacon, the gospels had not yet been written"![8]

One might have expected that, as the parish system gradually grew up in the 4th, 5th and 6th centuries, provision would have been

[1] Numbers 9. 26.

[2] Cf. Constit. Gelasi Papae (*PL* 56, 695): "absque episcopo vel presbytero baptizare non audeant (diaconi), nisi praedictis fortasse officiis longius constitutis necessitas extrema compellat, quod et laicis Christianis facere plerumque conceditur"; Rhabanus Maurus, *De Cler. Inst.*, I, 7 (*PL* 107, 303); the Councils of York (A.D. 1195) cn 4, London (1200) cn 3, Worcester (1240) cap. 12, Exeter (1287) cn 21, quoted by Thomassinus, II, p. 234.

[3] Ps.-Anacletus, Ep. 1 (Hinschius, p. 70). The *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, I, p. 118, says that St Peter ordained that seven deacons should assist at Mass!

[4] Isidorus, *De Eccl. Off.*, II, 8 (*PL* 83, 789C): "Non enim omnes vident alta mysteriorum, quae operiuntur a levitis, ne videant qui videre non debeant."

[5] The much-discussed 15th canon of the Council of Arles probably refers to the distribution of communion, not to consecration: "De diaconibus quos cognovimus multis locis offerre, placuit minime fieri debere." For other similar uses of *offerre* see the note of Lesleius on the Mozarabic *Missale Mixtum* (*PL* 85, 197).

[6] Durandus, *Rationale*, IV, 54, 2: "Hoc tamen, etsi iure cautum sit, non tamen servari vidimus."

[7] Cf. Num. 1, 50; 7. 5; 9. 26; 1 Par. 26, 20 f.

[8] Amalarius, *Lib. Officialis*, II, 12, 15 (ed. Hansenns, II, 226); cf. 1 Par. 15, 16.

made for the appointment of one or more deacons in every parish, to relieve the priest (or priests) of the care of temporal things and give them more time for purely spiritual activities. It would be incorrect to say that there *ought* to be a deacon in every parish, since the parish is not an institution of divine law[1] (as the diocese is) and its organization is therefore a matter for ecclesiastical decision. Evidence of an attempt to secure the appointment of a resident deacon in every parish is afforded by a canonical letter printed in the Appendix to the works of St Leo the Great; it prescribes that the deacon shall live in very close proximity to the priest, in such a way as to safeguard his chastity and therefore his good name.[2] However, this arrangement never seems to have been widely adopted; other documents which record for us something of the growth of the parish system make no allusion to resident deacons.[3] Probably the principal difficulty was the still common belief that the number seven was of divine law.

From very early times—at least as early as St Lawrence[4]—one of the seven deacons in each church enjoyed pre-eminence and was more closely associated with the bishop than his colleagues; he was called first "the bishop's deacon" (*diaconus episcopi*)[5] and later the "archdeacon".[6] St Jerome writes in a way which suggests that already in his day every diocese had its archdeacon;[7] but a canon of the Council of Merida (A.D. 666) makes it plain that at least in Spain the appointment of archdeacons was not yet universal.[8] So long as the other deacons still had charge of their diaconal regions, the archdeacon remained *primus inter pares*; but in course of time, when the other deacons ceased to have any administrative duties, and the archdeacon acquired ever greater and greater power in the diocese—including ordinary jurisdiction over the other deacons—the parity vanished.

The duties performed by archdeacons varied from diocese to diocese and depended at first upon how much authority and independence the bishops chose to allow them.[9] Sometimes they shared their authority with the archpriest of the diocese.[10] Already in the

[1] A good deal has been written on this subject in continental periodicals in recent years. Cf., for example, F. X. Arnold, "Zur Theologie der Pfarrei" in *Theol. Quartalschrift*, 1953, pp. 129–59.

[2] *PL* 56, 891.

[3] Cf. Ambros., *In I ad Tim.*, cap. 3 (*PL* 17, 471): "Nunc autem septem diaconos esse oportet, et aliquantos presbyteros ut bini sint per ecclesias, et unus in civitate episcopus"; Ep. Dionysii Secundi, Hinschius, p. 196.

[4] Cf. Ambros., *De Officiis*, I, 41 (*PL* 16, 84).

[5] Cf. P. Leder, *Die Diakonen der Bischöfe und Presbyter*, Stuttgart, 1905, pp. 306–7.

[6] The title occurs first in Optatus Milev., *De Schismate Donatistarum*, I, 16 (*PL* 11, 916).

[7] Hieron., *Ep. CXXV* (*PL* 22, 1080): "Singuli Ecclesiarum Episcopi, singuli Archipresbyteri, singuli Archidiaconi: et omnis ordo ecclesiasticus suis rectoribus nititur."

[8] Conc. Emeritense, cn 10 (*PL* 84, 619): "Communi deliberatione sancimus, ut omnes nos Episcopi infra nostram provinciam constituti in cathedralibus nostris ecclesiis singuli nostrum archipresbyterum, archidiaconum et primiclerum habere debeamus."

[9] Thomassinus, II, p. 149.

[10] Cf. Conc. Bracarense I (A.D. 563), cap. 7 (Harduin, III, 351).

time of Pope St Leo, the archdeacon at Rome had become a person of very great influence.[1] In the absence of the bishop, or when the see was vacant, the administration of the diocese was in the hands of the archdeacon.[2]

Usually it was the archdeacon's duty to supervise the junior clergy and instruct them in their offices—hence the remarkable prominence of the archdeacon in the rites of ordination to this present day. The Roman Pontifical still prescribes, for example, that the archdeacon should testify to the worthiness of the deacons presented for ordination to the priesthood. As being the chief "eye" of the bishop, the archdeacon was required to supervise the behaviour and morals of clerics and to report to the bishop anything that required correction. Until the 7th century, he had not the power to punish wrongdoers himself, but only to report them to the bishop. But thereafter bishops began to delegate jurisdiction to their archdeacons, and in course of time, by centennial and perennial custom, this jurisdiction became ordinary and could be exercised *sede vacante* no less than in normal times.[3]

Other duties assigned to the archdeacons were the supervision of collections, care of the poor, widows and pilgrims, visiting of prisons, and direction of schools for boys.[4] They also acted as high officials at Ecclesiastical Councils, and sometimes attended them as representatives of their bishops.[5] They accompanied their bishops for the visitation of parish churches, and were eventually allowed to make such visitations alone.[6]

In consequence, it would seem, of their right of visitation, of their jurisdiction over deacons and lesser clergy, and of their general position of eminence in the diocese, the archdeacons eventually acquired ordinary jurisdiction over parish priests both urban and rural.[7] This remarkable development was aided by the interpolation of a sentence into a famous letter of Isidore: "The archpriest must know that he is under the archdeacon and must obey his orders just as he obeys the bishop's."[8] The archdeacon's power began to rival that of the bishop, and it is not surprising to learn from various provincial

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[1] Cf. Thomassinus, II, pp. 126–8.

[2] Ep. Martini Papae I (Harduin, III, 677): "in absentia pontificis archidiaconus et archipresbyter et primicerus [note the order!] locum praesentant pontificis."

[3] Cf. Thomassinus, II, p. 136.

[4] Cf. Leder, op. cit., pp. 331–40.

[5] Conc. Tolet. IV, cn 4 (Harduin, III, 580): "Si presbyter aliquis, aut diaconus, clericus sive laicus de his qui foris steterint, Concilium pro qualibet re crediderit appellandum, Ecclesiae Metropolitanae archidiacono causam suam intimet, et ille Concilio denuntiet."

[6] Cf. Thomassinus, II, p. 136.

[7] Innoc. III, quoted by Thomassinus II, p. 137: "Omnem curam in clero, tam in urbe positorum quam eorum qui per parochias habitare noscuntur, ad se pertinere sciat (archidiaconus), sive de eorum conversatione, sive de honore et restauratione ecclesiarum, sive doctrina, etc., et delinquentium rationem coram Deo redditurus est."

[8] "Archipresbyter vero se esse sub Archidiacono eiusque praeceptis, sicut Episcopi sui, sciat obedire"—on which see Morinus, *De Sac. Ordinationibus*, Antwerp, 1695, III, pp. 219–20.

Councils that the archdeacon's authority was often resented as tyrannical.[1]

One undesirable result of the accumulation of powers and dignity by the archdeacons was that ordination from the archidiaconate to the priesthood came to be regarded as demotion. Another was that capable men were kept down in the order of deacon because they could not be spared from the office of archdeacon.[2] Occasionally, bishops used ordination to the priesthood as a means of ridding themselves of an archdeacon; but this abuse brought sharp reproof from Rome.[3] Theoretically in such cases the archdeacon could refuse to be ordained to the priesthood, but in practice it was not easy—as can be seen from the case of the 12th-century Archdeacon of London, Peter de Blois, who wrote to his bishop: "The order of dignities has been upset, and nowadays archdeacons are ranked above priests, exerting over them the force and power of their jurisdiction. Therefore, for an archdeacon to be promoted to the priesthood means not an increase of honour but a diminution."[4] That is why archdeacons were often promoted directly to the episcopacy.

Until the time of Hincmar, in the 10th century, it seems to have been an almost universal rule that the office of archdeacon should be held by one in deacon's orders;[5] the only exceptions were the laymen who, by an abuse, were allowed to hold the office in Carolingian times.[6] Hincmar seems to have been the first bishop to allow the title and powers of the archdeacon to be held and exercised by priests.[7] This arrangement was later to become the universal custom—no doubt because it was felt intolerable that members of a lower order should exercise jurisdiction over those of a higher. The retention of the title "archdeacon" concealed the true nature of what had come about, namely, that bishops had transferred to the presbyterate all the administrative powers previously assigned to the diaconate, and had thereby deprived the diaconate of all except its liturgical duties.

Were these bishops unwittingly doing violence to the true nature of the Church? In other words, are there certain administrative functions which in all places and at all times belong by right to the diaconate? The present writer would answer these questions in the negative. The duties that were assigned to the deacons and arch-

[1] Cf. the Councils of Châlons (A.D. 813), Paris (829), etc., quoted by Thomassinus, p. 133.

[2] Cf. Sidonius Apollinarius, IV, 25, of an archdeacon who afterwards became Bishop of Châlons: "in quo archidiaconi seu gradu seu ministerio multum retentus propter industriam, diu dignitate non potuit augeri, ne potestate posset absolvi."

[3] Cf. the letters of Leo the Great and Gregory the Great quoted by Leder, op. cit., pp. 333–4.

[4] Petrus Blesensis, *Ep. CXXIII* (*PL* 207, 365C); cf. *Ep. CXXXIX* (413–16).

[5] Cf. A. Schröder, *Die Entwicklung des Archidiakonats bis zum 11. Jahrhundert*, Munich, 1890, p. 24.

[6] Cf. Thomassinus, II, p. 134.

[7] He speaks of "Gonthario et Adhelardo archidiaconibus presbyteris", but Thomassinus cannot believe these men were both priests and archdeacons—"id quippe ab universalis ecclesiae consuetudine mirum in modum tunc abhorrebat".

deacons of the first millennium are not beneath the dignity of a priest; they become incongruous only when the whole energies of the priest are required for purely spiritual works. In a country where the Church is well established and there is a large supply of priests, most of them can afford to give some of their time and some of them the greater part of their time to administrative work.

It seems best, therefore, to draw a sharp distinction (as John Duns Scotus suggests[1]) between the *status* of deacon and the *powers* of the diaconate, and to say that the diaconate is essentially "an eminent grade in the Church" which makes its holder a fit person to exercise functions of a certain category, if his bishop sees good to authorize him to do so. The powers actually entrusted to deacons in different dioceses and at different times will then naturally depend upon local circumstances: where the supply of suitably trained candidates for the priesthood is abundant, the functions allotted to the deacons will be slight, whereas in missionary countries where suitable candidates for the diaconate are more easily found than suitable priests, there might well be a notable amplification of the powers and activities of the diaconate.

JOHN BLIGH, S.J.

Deacons in Protestantism

THE Protestant Churches have shown great variety, both in theory and in practice, in the use of the term "deacon".

Mention may first be made of the pre-Reformation Protestants—the Waldensians and Moravians. From the 13th century to 1532 (when they adopted a new Confession and assimilated their practices to the Swiss) the Waldensians were a kind of society not altogether dissevered from the Church, but having its presbyters (called *barbe*) and deacons (often called *minores* or *iuniores*); the latter were simply assistants to the *barbe*, and accompanied them (one deacon to each presbyter) on their frequent preaching tours.

Among the Moravians or Hussites of the 15th and 16th centuries the deacon had a similar function of assistant to the priest; he lived with the priest, helped him to teach in the school and in the *Brüderhaus* (where lived the Acoluths who were being trained for the priesthood), and accompanied him on mission journeys; he was allowed to preach, to baptize in case of necessity, and to assist in the administration of Holy Communion. The care of the poor was not in the hands of the deacon but of a special committee of three. So far no radical change had taken place in the traditional conception of the diaconate.

[1] Cf. Scotus, *In IV Sent.*, d. XXIV, q. 1, 3 (Op. Oxon.): "Gradus eminens in Ecclesia dicitur in ordine ad actum ecclesiasticum eminentem, non sic quidem quia gradus sit potestas exsequendi actum illum, ut dixit prior opinio improbata, sed quia gradus sit disponens de congruo vel simpliciter ad exsequendum vel debite illum actum, ut sic possit ordo, ut hic loquimur de ordine, dici gradus praeeminens in Ecclesia disponens ad actum aliquem ecclesiasticum eminentem."

Luther showed little interest in the status of the deacon. Essentially for him the Church is constituted by the Gospel, and consequently while the ministry of the word and sacraments is necessary and fundamental to the Church, other church officials are of quite secondary importance. Thus for the most part in the Lutheran districts of Germany the term "deacon" either disappeared or was retained merely as a title given to assistant pastors in large towns. Some such deacons still exist; they have the full status of a minister of the word and sacraments but work under the direction of the chief pastor. "Deacons" of this kind are specified in the Brandenburg Church Constitution of 1573, but in later times they were more often called "second or third pastor" (e.g. in the Bavaria Rescript of 1824).

Luther did, however, occasionally advocate a reformed deaconship. The service rendered by deacons, he said, for instance, "should not be to read the Gospel or Epistle, as is customary these days, but to distribute the Church's resources to the poor, . . . for it was for that purpose, as we read in Acts 6, that deacons were instituted. . . . After the office of preacher there is in the Church no higher office than the appointment by which a man handles the Church's funds justly and honestly, and the poor Christians who cannot make and earn their own livelihood are helped so that they do not suffer want."[1] It was in accordance with these views of Luther that the earliest German church constitutions[2] made provision for a community chest and the appointment of deacons to collect the funds, keep accounts, and meet together once a week to make distribution to the poor. There was also to be in the larger parishes a church-chest from which "deacons or overseers" were to pay the stipends of the clergy, sacristans and organists, and keep the churches in repair. One deacon of the latter type was to be a member of the Church Council. Deacons of this kind, however, did not become general in Germany. It was assumed in most districts that the poor would be cared for by the secular authorities or by unofficial help. Even where the office was officially provided for, it soon lapsed in practice.

Zwingli's views on this subject were similar to Luther's. He also was so taken up with reform of the essential ministry of the word and sacraments that he wrote very little about deacons. In the *Ratio Fidei*, in which in 1539 he summed up his mature beliefs, he made no mention of deacons and included among the duties of the true ministry the visiting of the sick and the feeding of the poor from the Church's resources in the Church's name. There was no necessity for a reformed diaconate in Zürich, the poor being efficiently dealt with by the Town Council. The First Helvetic Confession, issued in 1536 after Zwingli's death but under the influence of his ideas, makes no mention of the deacon but includes the care of the poor among the duties of the civil magistrate. Even the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566, thirty years after the first publication of Calvin's *Institutio*, mentions the title "deacon" only along with "patriarch, archbishop,

[1] *Works*, ed. Walch, Vol. XIII, p. 2466.

[2] E.g. the Brunswick order of 1528 quoted in Kidd, *Documents of the Continental Reformation*, pp. 230–3.

. . . subdeacon, acolyte" and other titles "as to which we care not what they may once have been or may be now: enough for us the apostolic doctrine of the ministry".[1] This Confession does advocate the appointment of "god-fearing and prudent men, of good administrative ability", to manage the finances of the Church for the relief of the poor and the maintenance of worship and teaching; but it gives them no title and they are not part of the ministry of the Church.[2]

The first sign of the "Reformed" type of deacon appears in the church constitution which Francis Lambert drafted for Philip of Hesse in 1526; this claimed to found church order on Scripture and provided for three orders of ministry—pastors, elders (for discipline), and deacons (for the care of the poor). The draft was too democratic for Luther's liking and he persuaded Philip to abandon it, but the ideas were developed by Bucer and given their classical expression by Calvin,[3] who took as the fountain-head of church order the list of functions in Rom. 12. 6–8 and 1 Cor. 12. 28. Omitting from this list the functions which he judged to be temporary only, he was left with four permanent offices in the church—(1) pastors, (2) teachers, (3) elders and (4) deacons, which were of two kinds, (*a*) "he that giveth", viz. those who distributed the alms of the church, and (*b*) "he that sheweth mercy", viz. those who cared for the poor and the sick, probably the "widows" of 1 Tim. 5. 10. Calvin differed from both Luther and Zwingli in his insistence that discipline and charity were functions of the church and should not be handed over to the secular authorities.

In his early days at Geneva Calvin had used the terms "deacon" and "subdeacon" to denote assistants at the administration of the Lord's Supper, but by 1541 the Geneva *Ordonnances* had set up a fourfold order which included deacons for the care of the poor. The example of Geneva was followed in almost all the Reformed Churches. Deacons for the care of the poor were part of John a' Lasco's London Church of foreign exiles in Edward VI's reign;[4] they were prescribed in the Gallican, Belgic, and Bohemian Confessions of Faith; and they were adopted also in Holland, in the Walloon Church, in the Reformed Churches of the Rhineland and Westphalia, in Scotland, and in the next century in the Waldensian Church in Italy. Only to Hungary did the deacon not penetrate; and in the Swiss churches outside Geneva the persons chosen for the care of the poor were not always given the title "deacon".

It was common to all these church orders that the deacon was a layman; that he acted as deacon as a part-time volunteer; and that he rarely had any teaching functions.[5] Whether the deacon took any

[1] xviii, 5, 6. [2] xxviii. [3] *Inst.*, IV, iii, 8–9; iv, 4; v, 15.

[4] A' Lasco's *Forma ac Ratio* contains a full order of service for the public inauguration of deacons into office, which concludes with an admonition to the minister and elders to take care "that this ministry of deaconship—a ministry most beautiful and highly necessary in the Church of Christ—does not degenerate into a bodiless mask or empty title".

[5] The only exceptions seem to have been due to shortage of pastors. This view of the diaconate is in curious contrast with Zwingli's comment on Phil. 1. 1 that deacons ought to preach, as Stephen and Philip did.

part in government or discipline or in the administration of the Lord's Supper varied from church to church, and there was also some development in the various churches as the centuries wore on.[1]

The French Discipline of 1559 required the deacons not only to receive and distribute the funds for the care of the poor, the prisoners, and the sick, but also to visit and care for these. Owing to shortage of pastors, elders and deacons were permitted to catechize in the households, provided they did not do it publicly. Calvin advised the French Synod in 1563 that deacons and elders, "being the arms and hands of the pastor", might properly assist him in distributing the bread and wine to the more remote of the seated communicants at the Holy Supper. The French deacons were regarded as members of the local Consistory and served as representatives on the provincial and national synods. In later times the deacon tended to be absorbed in the elder, and the modern Reformed Church of France, though it has lay officers for the care of the poor, does not call them "diacres".

In Dutch history there has been some tension between Church and State about the position of the deacon, and in the recent church constitution of 1950 the deacon has been made more definitely a church official. The deacons have control of the funds for the poor (both inside and outside the church), the other church funds being administered by special elders named "churchwardens". Deacons serve at the Lord's Table and are members, along with elders, of the higher courts of the church. In the lower Rhineland and other Reformed districts of Germany the deacon became simply the member of the parish council appointed as parish almoner, a different councillor acting as church treasurer; specific provision was made for this in the Rhenish-Westphalian Church Constitution of 1835 and the Württemberg Order of 1851.

In Scotland, Knox instituted deacons at the very outset. According to the first Book of Discipline (1561), "their office is to gather the almes diligentlie, and faithfullie to distribute it, with the consent of the ministers and elders; also to provide for the sicke and impotent persouns; having ever a diligent care, that the charitie of godlie men be not wasted upoun loiterers and idle vagabounds". The Second Book of Discipline (1581) went further and allotted to the deacons power "to receave and to distribute the haill ecclesiasticall gudes unto them to whom they ar appoyntit. This they aucht to do according to the judgement and appoyntment of the presbyteries or elderschips (of the quhilk the deacons ar not)". In the 16th and 17th centuries deacons used regularly to attend meetings of the Session (i.e. the local elders) in order to receive instructions about the distribution of the poor's funds; sometimes in the early days they were given a share in the general work of the Session, including its disciplinary functions, and before 1581 deacons used to attend meetings of the higher church courts.[2] They were also sometimes em-

[1] See the account in Chap. V of Dr G. D. Henderson's *Presbyterianism* (1954), to which the following paragraphs are much indebted.

[2] See Dr Henderson's *Scottish Ruling Elder* (1935), pp. 68–70.

ployed, along with elders, to hand round the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper, on the theory that it was the deacons' business to "serve tables" (Acts 6. 2).[1] In the 17th and 18th centuries the deacon gradually faded away in Scotland, the relief of the poor being attended to by the Session,[2] and the finance and property of the church by the heritors (landowners) of the parish. The 18th-century Seceders appointed for the most part "managers", not "deacons", to deal with church finance. In the 19th century efforts were made to revive the diaconate; Thomas Chalmers used deacons to assist the Session of St John's Church, Glasgow, in his determined attempt to manage an efficient system of poor relief through the church. J. G. Lorimer, another Glasgow minister, wrote in 1843 a timely book entitled *The Deaconship: A Treatise on the Office of Deacon, with suggestions for its Revival in the Church of Scotland.* When the Free Church separated in 1843 it immediately appointed deacons to manage property and finance in the congregations; to collect contributions for the central fund for the maintenance of the ministry (they used to visit the members for this purpose, a district being allotted to each deacon); to attend to the congregational poor; and to watch over the education of the children of the poor. In the reunited Church of Scotland at the present day many former Free Church congregations retain this office of deacon, but in the modern welfare state there is little scope for ecclesiastical administration of poor relief, and in the majority of parishes and congregations financial affairs are managed by the elders or by a "Congregational Board".

The English Puritans were also among the admirers of the Genevan discipline, and the English exiles in Frankfurt and Geneva in Queen Mary's reign established deacons for the care of the poor; at Frankfurt they were also, "considering the present state of the Church", to visit the sick and assist in catechizing the youth; and in fact they even for a time assisted the pastor in preaching. From 1571 onwards the Puritan reformers included in their platform a demand for the reform of the diaconate; a typical statement of their position is in the first *Admonition to the Parliament*:

> "Touchyng Deacons, though their names be remaining, yet is the office fowlie perverted and turned upside downe, for their dutie in the primative church, was to [Rom. 12. 8] gather the almes diligently, and to distribute it faithfully, also for the sicke and impotent persones to provide painefully, having ever a diligent care. . . . Now it is the first step to the ministerie, nay, rather a mere order of priesthode."[3]

As in contemporary Scotland, the deacon was not only to care for the poor but also to assist the Consistory in the maintenance of discipline and to attend conferences and synods. The Westminster Assembly briefly included deacons in its *Form of Church-Government*:

> "The Scripture doth hold out Deacons as distinct officers in the church. Phil. 1. 1, 1 Tim. 3. 8. Whose Office is perpetual. 1 Tim. 3. 8, Acts 6. 1–4.

[1] See Dr Henderson's *Scottish Ruling Elder* (1935), pp. 60–3.
[2] Ibid. pp. 69–72.
[3] *Puritan Manifestoes*, ed. Frere and Douglas (1907), p. 15.

> To whose Office it belongs not to preach the Word or administer the Sacraments, but to take special care in distributing to the necessities of the poor. Acts 6, 1–4."

The modern Presbyterian Church of England, on the model of the Free Church of Scotland, has deacons who, jointly with the elders, handle the financial affairs of the congregation, while the congregational benevolent fund is administered by the Session. In some congregations finance is controlled not by the Deacons' Court but by "managers", a system deriving from the former United Presbyterian Church in Scotland.

Provision is made in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for local Boards of Deacons to be in charge of the poor and of the temporal affairs of the congregation; but in many congregations this is not in operation. In the various Presbyterian Churches in the United States similar provision is made for deacons, who in some places administer charitable funds only, in some places all the temporalities of the congregation, and sometimes do not exist at all. In the Reformed Church of America (of Dutch origin) the deacons are regarded as part of the local Consistory.

The Presbyterian (Calvinistic Methodist) Church of Wales has officially no deacons, but sometimes its elders are popularly called deacons, in imitation no doubt of Congregational and Baptist usage.

The earliest Congregationalists set up in their gathered congregations those offices which the Puritan reformers were trying to get established in the Church of England—pastors, elders, and deacons. John Owen (1616–83), in his *True Nature of a Gospel Church*, described the office of deacon as instituted "to free the pastors of the churches who labour in the word and doctrine from avocations by outward things". Therefore "it belongs unto the deacons not only to take care of the poor but to manage all other affairs of the church of the same kind", e.g. providing a church building and collecting and spending the general funds of the local church; they are to act under directions from the elders. In America the "Cambridge Platform" of 1648 described the duties of deacons thus (chap. viii):

> "To receive the offerings of the church, gifts given to the church, and to keep the treasury of the church, and therewith to serve the tables which the church is to provide for, as the Lord's table, the table of the ministers, and of such as are in necessity."

By the end of the 17th century, however, the office of elder had practically disappeared in both England and America, and the deacons took over the superintendence of both the spiritual and the temporal affairs of the church, subject of course to control by the church meeting. A few Congregational churches to-day have both elders and deacons, in others the administration of financial affairs is entrusted to a financial board consisting partly of selected deacons, leaving the deacons as a whole to attend to the general and spiritual concerns of the local church, just like the Presbyterian elders. The office of lay preacher is distinct from that of deacon, though the two may be held

by the same person. A deacon is sometimes appointed by the local church to preside at an observance of the Lord's Supper.

The history and practice of the Baptists does not in this matter differ significantly from that of the Congregationalists. They too originally had elders as well as deacons, but the office of elder as distinct from that of pastor disappeared during the 17th century,[1] leaving the deacon in much the same position as the Presbyterian elder.

The English Methodists have no diaconate so called, thus betraying their origin as a society rather than as a church. The American Methodists were, however, constituted as a church by John Wesley, and use the title of deacon, according to his constitution, to denote a junior minister who may baptize and preach but not consecrate the elements at the Holy Communion or hold a pastoral charge.

Churches of Christ, and their American counterpart the Disciples of Christ, have two orders of ministry, elders and deacons, the latter, as in Presbyterian churches, being responsible for the local church's financial affairs and benevolences, although among the Disciples the distinction between elder and deacon is not always observed.

The Moravian Church in its modern form regards its deacons as a second order of presbyters who are authorized to preach and to administer the sacraments.

An important development of the diaconate has taken place in Germany in modern times. In 1833 J. H. Wichern founded in Hamburg an institute for the rescue and training of neglected children; the work grew and he enrolled "brothers" to help him; many of these *Brüder* after being trained at his institute were sent out to do similar work on their own. Soon other similar institutions were started and the work became part of the Home Mission (*Innere Mission*). Meanwhile Theodor Fliedner had founded at Duisburg the first Deaconess House, doing similar work through deaconesses (Fliedner borrowed the name from the Dutch Mennonites). Gradually it became recognized that the *Brüder* of the *Innere Mission*, like the deaconesses, were supplying the kind of *diakonia* that the missing third order of ministry[2] ought to be doing—presenting the Gospel to the world, not by preaching and sacrament, but by acts of love, by education, and by service of all kinds to those in physical, moral, and spiritual need. Hence the men too have come to be known generally as "deacons" and are becoming more and more integrated into the life of the Church. While many still work in institutions of various kinds for the care of children, the aged, cripples, epileptics, etc., others do evangelistic work, e.g. among seamen, others sell tracts and Bibles or promote Bible study, and others act as general parish assistants, sometimes taking charge of a parish if no pastor is avail-

[1] The reason for the disappearance of the Congregational and Baptist elder is probably that these bodies were unable to see any Scriptural justification for an office of elder distinct from pastor, and as the churches could not afford to maintain more than one pastor the other elders dropped away.

[2] This was most interestingly advocated by Baron von Bunsen in *Die Verfassung der Kirche der Zukunft* (1845), published in English two years later as *The Constitution of the Church of the Future.*

able. But the diaconate is a life-work on its own and is not considered to be a preparation for the pastorate.

A diaconate of the *Innere Mission* type has spread to Hungary and Scandinavia, where no other form of deacon is known. It has not, however, penetrated the United States, where Lutherans often use the term deacon in a Presbyterian sense to denote lay voluntary officers who have charge of the temporal affairs of the local congregation.

To sum up: Protestants who are not content that the diaconate should be simply a short step to the full ministry have appointed "deacons" for one or more of five functions:

(1) The care of the poor within the Christian community (this often has not given the deacon a worthwhile job);
(2) the care of the poor and needy of all kinds in the community at large (this has often been left to the secular authorities or to agencies outside the Church);
(3) the administration of the financial and material concerns of the local congregation;
(4) the general oversight of the local congregation;
(5) distribution of the elements at the Holy Communion.

All these have been justified out of Scripture.

It may be added that most churches nowadays admit women to the diaconate, but few of these are called "deaconesses".[1] J. M. Ross.

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CORRESPONDENCE

PRAYER

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

DEAR SIR,

If this letter appears to be critical of what Mr Townroe wrote in July, may I begin by saying thank you as humbly as I can for the

[1] The use of the term "deaconess" in the Protestant Churches is fully dealt with in Dr Kathleen Bliss's book *The Service and Status of Women in the Churches* (1952).

solid practical helpfulness of his article? This is a personal thank you, because I have a suspicion that I may have been the priest with a wife who complained that most prayer manuals seemed to be written for those with servants, and here is a real answer to that difficulty.

Yet certain things that Mr Townroe does not say leave me with a number of doubts. When one lives in the midst of a vast majority of non-Christians, and when the Christians themselves are all the time tempted to forget this fact and concentrate on their own affairs like any other community in India, one may be excused for being oversensitive to what is fully Christian, and what is simply religious in the universal sense. I would like therefore to express doubts—not about the practical value of what Mr Townroe has written—but about the theology underlying it, and I shall do so under two heads.

I. *Committal.* It is very good at last to find someone writing clearly and helpfully about *how* to pray, but in my mind is a doubt whether the ways suggested here are of any value at all, unless one is consciously committed to Christ. I should like to have said "converted", meaning, aware that one's sins have been taken away by Christ, aware that one has entered a new life by his resurrection; but such an awareness is not always the beginning of a man's active Christian life, so I have spoken of committal instead. By this I mean the conscious turning away from all other loyalties, the deliberate willing to trust and obey him first in all things, particularly as he has declared his will in his life and teaching. I have recently become friends with a most courteous and devout Hindu lecturer in Indian Philosophy in whose presence, more than with several Christians, I feel I am talking to a "believer". I have a suspicion that he could with real gladness use any of the ways and forms of prayer suggested in Mr Townroe's article without in any way feeling it incumbent on him to leave the Hindu fold and be baptized into Christ. I similarly suspect that many of us who are called Christians could use these prayers without any real committal to Christ and to Biblical obedience. Can one pray Christian prayers unless one is committed to Christ? It seems to me that Mr Townroe's article does not ask this question.

II. *Witness.* Mr Townroe rightly insists that to come to the fullness of the Christian (prayer) life, it is essential to be living in the corporate life of the Church, in its faith, its worship, its sacraments and its common life. It may be said that this common life includes evangelism—the actual bringing of men and women to the point where they must decide whether to commit themselves to Christ or not. But unless this is said specifically, I think that many will feel they are doing the "opus Dei" well enough indeed, if they advance in the prayer life and enter into the church's inner experience. In Travancore, one of the greatest menaces to the continued growth of the church, as it seems to me, is the men and women—and clergy—who take the Christian's duty to be to live a "māthruga jivitham" or model life, but who have lost the power to believe that by their mouth any

Hindu might hear the saving word of God. Would the ways of prayer referred to in any way prick their consciences?

For that reason, when I am asked about prayer, or when I lecture about it, I often suggest that the first prayer of an eager Christian seeker should be a prayer for a natural opportunity to bear witness to another person. I want them to know that God is active, that he has power to answer prayer, that he leads, that he opens the way forward. I cannot too often remember that, quite contrary to what so many of the textbooks tell us, 90 per cent. of Jesus' teaching about prayer is about asking for things—and getting them! This applies to those, of course, who are committed and so will tend to ask for practical things, not for themselves, but in the sphere of the petition "Thy will be done". I expect that this will sound desperately activist to Mr Townroe, and I believe it is to those who are aware of being somewhat over-Pelagian in their service that Mr Townroe's suggestions will come with the greatest value. But I believe that even activism is better than too much passivism, which leaves God with no particular character or activity, when surely all Biblical theology cries out that God's nature is defined by his activity. Our prayer must in some part be an entering into that tranquil yet determined operation of God.

Yours faithfully,

GEOFFREY PAUL.

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EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

I regret that holidays prevented an earlier answer to Miss Bailey's question about my statement (somewhat casual and incidental) in regard to eternal punishment. What I had in mind was the view expressed by Quick in *Doctrines of the Creed*, p. 244: "[God's] purpose cannot be finally fulfilled in a world where the sentences of pain decreed by justice are equally unending with the gifts of love. We must picture the final world as one in which every enemy has been destroyed, rather than one in which enemies are kept perpetually alive by God's judgement in order to be perpetually cut off from his mercy." Bicknell, *The Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 152 n., speaks of Hell as "eternal loss, rather than eternal punishment". It is true that on p. 214 he seems to retain a highly refined form of eternal punishment: but he also says there "our mind rightly revolts from the thought of useless tortures prolonged through all eternity"—but it is exactly this which "eternal punishment" (as distinct from loss or annihilation) does suggest, at least to me. Incidentally, such a conception was widely held at the time of the rise of the Jehovah's Witnesses, and it was against this that the early Witnesses rebelled. The Report *Doctrine in the Church of England* does not seem to refer to the question, but it is difficult to believe that its authors would have upheld eternal punishment: and, while it has no formal authority,

this Report does have very weighty backing. As regards the R.C.s, I must admit that J. P. Arendzen, in *The Teaching of the Catholic Church*, 1948, edited by G. D. Smith, upholds eternal punishment, and explicitly rules out annihilation as an alternative. So no doubt my statement was somewhat too sweeping.

Yours faithfully,
G. F. S. Gray.

BOOK REVIEWS

Graceful Reason: The Contribution of Reason to Theology. By J. V. Langmead Casserley. Longmans. 12s. 6d.

Being and Becoming. By D. J. B. Hawkins. Sheed and Ward. 10s. 6d.

These two books help to meet two current needs. In the last generation the attack on the possibility of metaphysics has developed, and men have argued that the human intellect is altogether cut off from ultimate reality and truth. Dr Casserley's book is about the place and importance of natural theology, and he argues for the development of mutual collaboration between the philosopher and the theologian. His sub-title is expressive of the purpose of the book: *The Contribution of Reason to Theology*. The second need is that met by Dr Hawkins in his "metaphysical essay in the Aristotelian tradition". In an earlier book of his, *The Criticism of Experience*, Dr Hawkins had argued that at the root of that Babel of false philosophies which afflicts the world are false theories of knowledge. In *Being and Becoming* some of those concepts are discussed which we cannot help using if we are to think at all about knowing—that "self-transcendence by which the mind discovers itself in contact with reality". Take the two books together, letting Dr Hawkins follow Dr Casserley, and we shall be much better equipped to justify our belief and to understand our claim to know.

Dr Casserley's book is, in appearance, as graceful as its title. In page, in print, and in margin it is a delight to the eye; and for many, whose time for reading is all too often broken up, the crossheadings in the text, linking up with the table of contents, will be a help. Dr Hawkins is not presented to us with quite the same grace, but he prefaces his essay with eight pages of *Analysis of Contents*, which are of great value in recapitulating the sequence of his thought. Neither book has an index. Dr Hawkins does not need one: but I hope it is not ungracious to say that I wish Dr Casserley had given us one.

Dr Casserley's book is based on lectures "given to students, and not to or for expert philosophers and theologians". It is described as a "book for the enquiring intelligent layman", but many of us who are not laymen will be glad to join those students for whom it was first prepared. We shall soon find ourselves reminded that "a natural theology is not first and primarily a ladder on which one climbs to faith, but, on the contrary, something which the Christian, thinking

in the tradition of faith, labours to construct". Then follows a discussion of what is really meant by the finitude of the human intellect, or what is the effect of sin upon thought. This effect is not such as to deny any achievement to Natural Theology. This is attested by a study of the cosmological argument (though not when clad in scientific dress) and of the existential argument, which sees "our own intimate experience of existence . . . as the proper and necessary point of departure in philosophy". Of these there is an ultimate convergence, and Christians will clearly welcome this without disparaging their "more profound and more empirical ways of confirming the truth of the theistic hypothesis".

Natural Theology can go a little further and show the improbability of hypotheses alleged to be alternative to theism. This Casserley discusses in the fourth chapter; and in the fifth, in the course of a consideration of the theology of nature, he has some valuable remarks on the priority of the doctrine of creation to the doctrine of redemption. We can't talk about sin unless we have some idea of what we are failing to become. These ten pages have much to suggest, whereas the next fifteen on Theology and Science are below the level of the rest.

In a brief final chapter wise things are said on the problem of communication. "The natural theologian is a kind of missionary," and "reason is more, and not less, rational when it takes for its proper theme the truth of God."

Dr Hawkins' book does not lend itself to this kind of summary. He writes for philosophers rather than for "the enquiring intelligent layman", but those of us who are neither philosophers nor laymen will find much to help our thinking, since we are not likely to be numbered among those Thomists who, Hawkins thinks, may find some of his suggestions "unwanted and ugly excrescences on an already complete and harmonious edifice".

The first of the presuppositions of experience to be considered is the notion of being itself, with its main problem of existence and individuality. In our thinking about things we have to discover those distinctions and relations which serve our understanding of the whole, and similarity (because of the question of universals) is one of the most important relations, of which analogy is an extension, and which itself is the foundation of number.

Then, in Chapters VII and VIII, change, and the consequent necessity of the concept of substance, are discussed. This is naturally followed by a chapter on Value; and the book ends with three chapters on Causality in which the author reconsiders views first published by him in 1937.

In the topics noted in these lines and discussed by Hawkins we have the prolegomena to any philosophical theology. His book is not easy reading, but it is rewarding.

H. C. L. Heywood.

Southwell.

THE LAYMAN IN THE CHURCH. By Michael de la Bedoyere. Burns and Oates. 10s. 6d.

Ourselves free of the least taint of *apartheid*, we may go in humility to the book of a Roman if it is likely to do us good, and here probably is such a book. In an earlier work, entitled *Living Christianity*, the editor of the *Catholic Herald* dealt in a fresh and arresting manner with the mutual relations of religion and life. Believing that laymen may be able to contribute to the subject, he wished to communicate the results of his own "lay experience and reflection on spiritual matters". *Inter alia*, he contended that there are shortcomings in the formation which the Roman laity receive from clerical schools and in their parishes, and he proposed remedies. In the present volume he has a cognate theme, and he is equally commendable. He observes that a kind of wall seems to separate the Roman Church from the people. He feels that the wall has the effect of making all the Christian Churches appear as "standing away from the world", as being something apart and distinct from ordinary life. He wants the wall pulled down.

When he says that "lay Catholicism" was unknown in the Middle Ages and that its beginnings coincided with the rise of the New Learning, we cannot refrain from recalling that indeed one strong impulse behind the Reformation was the desire to have laymen admitted to full membership of the Church, a desire commemorated in that prayer of the Church of England's Order for Holy Communion which affirms that "the mystical body of thy Son . . . is the blessed company of all faithful people". Even to-day the Roman laity evidently labour under taxation without representation; for the Italian Jesuit, Father Lombardi, has proposed the institution of various bodies to give that laity a share in the government of their Church—a lay senate in Rome and consultative assemblies of lay representatives in each country, diocese, and parish. Learning of those proposals, we in the Church of England may be tempted to say, "You have only to copy us!" Count Michael de la Bedoyere writes, too, of "the way in which religious goodness has been misunderstood to mean precisely the lack of balance, the artificiality, the smugness of a piety that is plastered on from without rather than grown from within in a living, balanced whole"; and as we read it may seem to us that the temptation to acquire and display a superficial and purely external piety is stronger among the Romans than it can be with us. In the eyes of the great central body of Anglicans, it would almost seem as though there were invitations to theatricality. Yet it would be folly to let those or similar considerations persuade us that members of the Established Church in this country will learn nothing to their advantage from a Roman layman's insistence on "the need of an apostolic laity".

What, then, is his view of the layman's own function in the Church? It is that the function is twofold. The layman has his function in worship and he has a part to play in the daily life that he leads in the world. The common notion of prayer is of "the individual person going on his knees and either reading prayers from a

book or engaging in a kind of colloquy with God—telling Him his troubles, asking for His help, begging for favours, making acts of affection". But "liturgical prayer" is not really like that, although that is included in it.

> In the liturgy we are so integrated with Christ . . . that our prayer, from being a human raising up of the mind and heart, has been converted quite literally into a way to Almighty God "through Christ and with Christ and in Christ".

Thus every layman is to some extent a priest, and it is part of the purpose of the book to recall that every layman shares as well in the other two attributes of his Redeemer, and is both prophet and king. A layman is a king to the extent he has authority, and he should ever remember in whose behalf he exercises it. As to the part of prophet, the vocation of the layman is to be apostolic through leading a Christ-like life in the world, and thus by example to draw souls to the Church and to their Saviour.

> The truly religious life is not, I venture to suggest, what we too often think it to be, namely a life of exceptional *religious* devotion and *personal moral* observance more or less detached from the indifferent and often evil ways of secular life; the truly religious life is the full spiritual flower of *the good life lived in the world and through the proper use of the things of the world.*

Thus the two functions of the layman come to be unified. For the way to leading a daily life that shall be Christ-like is to enter into communion with God through whole-hearted absorption in the liturgy.

The book possesses an additional interest in some political opinions. Count de la Bedoyere says that the answer to nationalism is not to abolish nationality, but for laymen to do all they can to promote whatever is enriching to the world and to their own country within the national tradition. That the *Catholic Herald* tends to the left in politics is well known, and it is to be expected that the editor should say on this occasion that the money and power which were held by the few were due in justice to the many. But not only is our "national tradition" not of the modern left, but also he can hardly have reflected on what quantity of power falls to each when power is shared out among all. Hobbes well said that democracy is power chopped small, and both Bertrand de Jouvenel and Max Beloff have recently shown that everywhere to-day the individual is politically powerless. Count de la Bedoyere is happier where he warns against looking to democracy to engender Utopia, and where he says:

> More important than political self-government . . . is the establishment of cultural, social and economic freedoms to permit of the self-development of the human being in a sufficient personal independence from massive authorities, whether State or Church—the latter in the historical sense of clerical power exercised over secular life.

As to that, he feels that in Spain more of such freedoms "can for the time being be achieved under a benevolent authoritarianism" than would be achieved if the *régime* were democratic.

MONTGOMERY BELGION.

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